

Summer Exposures



 **conference highlight**

2017 CSDA Annual Conference and Exhibitor Showcase

BREAKOUT SESSION

Gender Identity in the Workplace

September 27, 2017

11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Summer is once again upon us and Heat Illness Prevention is a key SAFETY topic this time of year. Heat Illness is not restricted to the desert areas of California. Heat Illness can occur where employees are exposed to changes in outside temperatures and working conditions.

The body normally cools itself by sweating. During hot weather, especially with high humidity, sweating isn't enough. Body temperature can rise to dangerous levels if you don't drink enough water and rest in the shade. You can suffer from *heat exhaustion or heat stroke*.

In 2014 alone, **2,630** workers suffered from heat illness and 18 died from heat stroke and related causes on the job. *Heat illnesses and deaths are preventable.*

Employers must protect workers from excessive heat.

Under OSHA law, employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards. This includes protecting workers from extreme heat. An employer with workers exposed to high temperatures should establish a complete heat illness prevention program.

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- Provide workers with water, rest and shade.
- Allow new or returning workers to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks as they acclimatize, or build a tolerance for working in the heat.
- Plan for emergencies and train workers on prevention.
- Monitor workers for signs of illness.

To prevent heat related illness and fatalities:

- Drink water every 15 minutes, even if you are not thirsty.
- Rest in the shade to cool down.
- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing.
- Learn the signs of heat illness and what to do in an emergency.
- Keep an eye on fellow workers.
- “Easy does it” on your first days of work in the heat. You need to get used to it.

Working in full sunlight can increase heat index values by 15 degrees Fahrenheit. Keep this in mind and plan additional precautions for working in these conditions.

Who is affected?

Any worker exposed to hot and humid conditions is at risk of heat illness, especially those doing heavy work tasks or using bulky protective clothing and equipment. Some workers might be at greater risk than others if they have not built up a tolerance to hot conditions, **including new workers, temporary workers, or those returning to work after a week or more off.** All workers are at risk during a heat wave.

Industries most affected by heat-related illness are: construction; trade, transportation and utilities; agriculture; building, grounds maintenance; landscaping services; and support activities for oil and gas operations.

What to do if a worker becomes ill?

Call a supervisor for help. If a supervisor is not available, call 911. Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.

Another potential exposure employees who work outdoors is tick bites. While it is a good idea to take preventive measures against ticks year-round, be extra vigilant in warmer months (April – September) when ticks are most active.

Avoid direct contact with ticks

- Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.

Repel ticks on skin and clothing

- Use repellent that contains 20 percent or more DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin for protection that lasts several hours.
 - Always follow product instructions. Parents should apply this product to their children, avoiding hands, eyes, and mouth.
- Use products that contain permethrin on clothing. Treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents with products containing 0.5% permethrin. It remains protective through several washings. Pre-treated clothing is available and may be protective longer.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has an online tool to help you select the repellent that is best for you and your family found at <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>.



Find and remove ticks from your body

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within 2 hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from tick-infested areas. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in their hair.
- Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and day packs.
- Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors.
 - If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed.
 - If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks effectively. If the clothes cannot be washed in hot water, tumble dry on low heat for 90 minutes or high heat for 60 minutes. The clothes should be warm and completely dry. ▲

Please contact SDRMA Chief Risk Officer Dennis Timoney at 800.537.7790 or email at dtimoney@sdрма.org for more information.



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