

Heat Illness Prevention Training

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With the summer months ahead and temperatures already exceeding 100 degrees in some areas of California, it is time to revisit Cal/OSHA - Heat Illness Prevention Training.

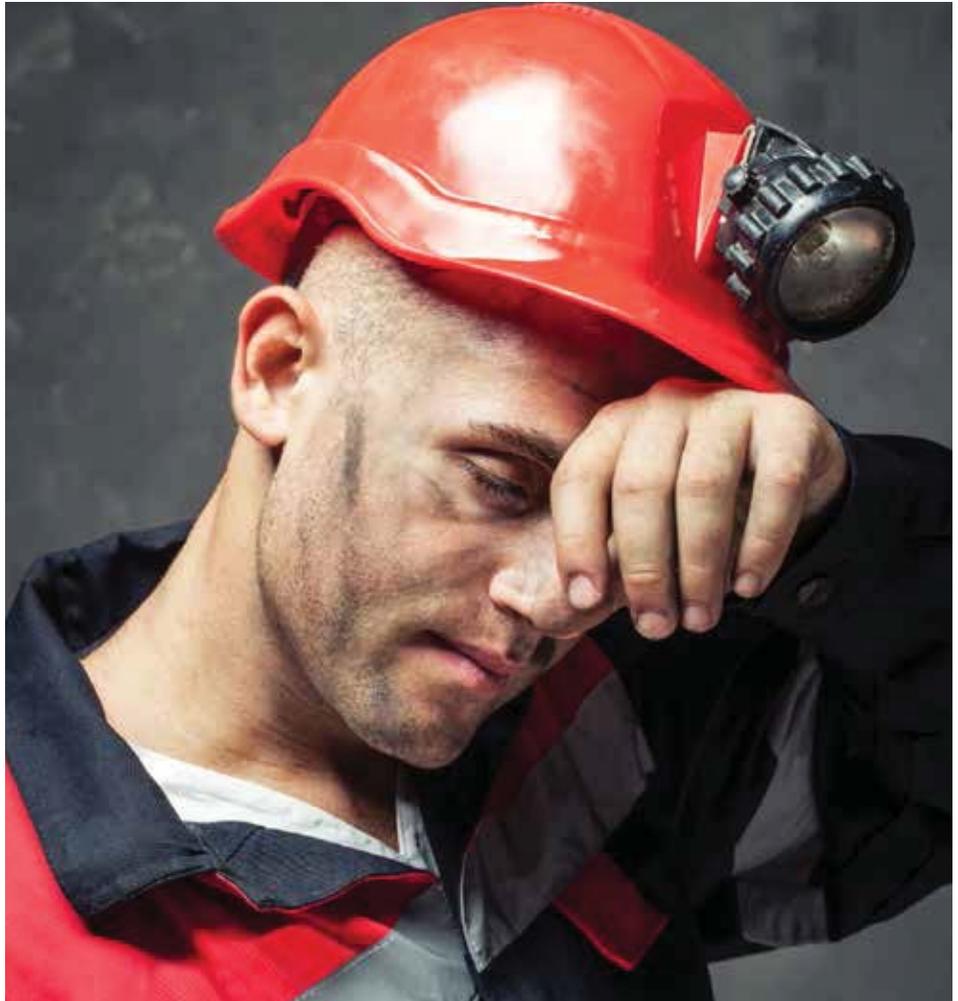
All California employers are required to take these four steps to prevent heat illness:

TRAINING

Train all employees and supervisors about heat illness prevention.

WATER

Provide enough fresh water so that each employee can drink at least one quart per hour, or four 8-ounce glasses of water per hour, and encourage them to do so.



SHADE

Provide access to shade and encourage employees to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least five minutes. They should not wait until they feel sick to cool down.

PLANNING

Develop and implement written procedures for complying with the Cal/OSHA Heat Illness Prevention Standard.

California employers with any outdoor places of employment must comply with the Heat Illness Prevention standard, California Code of Regulations, Title 8, section 3395 (8 CCR 3395). These procedures have been created to assist employers in establishing their own heat illness prevention procedures and to reduce

the risk of work-related heat illnesses to their employees.

These procedures are not intended to supersede or replace the application of any other Title 8 sections, particularly 8 CCR 3203, Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), which requires an employer to establish, implement, and maintain an effective IIPP. You may integrate your heat illness prevention procedures into your IIPP. You must also be aware that other standards also apply to heat illness prevention, such as the construction, agriculture, and general industry requirements to provide drinking water, first aid, and emergency response.

To tailor these procedures to your work activities, evaluate and consider the specific conditions present at your site such as:

1. The size of the crew.
2. The length of the work-shift.
3. The ambient temperature (which can either be taken using a simple thermometer or estimated by monitoring the weather).
4. Additional sources of heat or the use of personal protective equipment that may increase the body's heat burden.
5. Again, these sample procedures do not include every workplace scenario so it is crucial that you take into account and evaluate conditions found in your individual workplace that are likely to cause a heat illness.

Mandatory requirements for written procedures must also do the following:

1. Identify the person(s) responsible for the particular task(s) (e.g., supervisor, foreman, safety coordinator, crew leader).
2. Describe in detail the steps required to carry out the task and ensure that the task is accomplished successfully, including the number and size of water containers and shade structures; distance to their placement; and frequency of water replenishment, water breaks/reminders, weather-tracking, etc.
3. Specify how you will communicate these procedures to your employees, particularly the person(s) assigned to be responsible for them, and how you will verify that the procedures and instructions are being followed.

Procedures for the Provision of Water:

- ✔ Drinking water containers (5 to 10 gallons each) will be brought to the site so that at least two quarts per employee are available at the start of the shift. All employees, whether working individually or in smaller crews, will have access to drinking water.
- ✔ Paper cones or bags of disposable cups and the necessary cup dispensers will be made available to employees and will be kept clean until used.
- ✔ As part of the Effective Replenishment Procedures, the water level of all containers will be checked periodically (e.g., every hour, every 30 minutes) and more frequently when the temperature rises. Water containers will be refilled with cool water when the water level within a container drops below 50 percent. Additional water containers (e.g., 5-gallon bottles) will be delivered to replace water as needed.
- ✔ Water will be fresh, pure, suitably cool, and provided to employees free of charge. Supervisors will visually examine the water and pour some on their skin to ensure that the water is suitably cool. During hot weather, the water must be cooler than the ambient temperature, but not so cool as to cause discomfort.
- ✔ Water containers will be located as close as practicable to the areas where employees are working (depending on the working conditions and layout of the worksite) to encourage the frequent drinking of water. If field terrain prevents the water from being placed within a reasonable distance from the employees, bottled water or personal water containers will be made available so that employees can have drinking water readily accessible.
- ✔ Since water containers are smaller than shade structures, they can be placed closer to employees than shade structures. Placing water only in designated shade areas or where toilet facilities are located is not sufficient. When employees are working across large areas, water will be placed in multiple locations. For example, on a multi-story construction site, water will be placed in a safely accessible location on every floor where employees are working.

continued on page 42

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- ✔ All water containers will be kept in a sanitary condition. Water from non-approved or non-tested water sources (e.g., untested wells) is not acceptable. If hoses or connections are used, they must be approved for potable drinking water systems as shown on the manufacturer's label.
- ✔ Daily, employees will be reminded of the location of the water coolers and of the importance of drinking water frequently. When the temperature exceeds, or is expected to exceed, 80 degrees Fahrenheit, brief "tailgate" meetings will be held with employees each morning to review the importance of drinking water, the number and schedule of water and rest breaks, and the signs and symptoms of heat illness.
- ✔ Audible devices, such as whistles or air horns, will be used to remind employees to drink water.
- ✔ When the temperature equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit, or during a heat wave, pre-shift meetings will be conducted before the commencement of work to both encourage employees to drink plenty of water and to remind employees of their right to take a cool-down rest when necessary. Additionally, the number of water breaks will be increased. Supervisors/foremen will lead by example and remind employees throughout the work shift to drink water.
- ✔ Individual water containers or bottled water provided to employees will be adequately identified to eliminate the possibility of drinking from a co-worker's container or bottle.



Procedures for Access to Shade:

- ✔ Shade structures will be opened and placed as close as practicable to the employees when the temperature equals or exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit. When the temperature is below 80 degrees Fahrenheit, access to shade will be provided promptly, when requested by an employee.
Note: The interior of a vehicle may not be used to provide shade unless the vehicle is air-conditioned and the air conditioner is on.
- ✔ Enough shade structures will be available at the site to accommodate all of the employees who are on a break at any point in time. During meal periods, there will be enough shade for all employees who choose to remain in the general area of work or in areas designated for recovery and rest periods. (Employers may rotate employees in and out of meal periods, as with recovery and rest periods.)

- ✔ Daily, employees will be informed of the location of the shade structures and will be encouraged to take a five-minute cool-down rest in the shade. An employee who takes a preventative cool-down rest break will be monitored and asked if they are experiencing symptoms of heat illness. In no case will the employee be ordered back to work until signs or symptoms of heat illness have abated.
- ✔ As crews move, shade structures will be relocated to be placed as close as practicable to the employees so that access to shade is provided at all times. All employees on a recovery or rest break, or a meal period, will have full access to shade so they can sit in a normal posture without having to be in physical contact with each other.

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- ✔ Before trees or other vegetation are used to provide shade (such as in orchards), the thickness and shape of the shaded area will be evaluated to ensure that sufficient shadow is cast to protect employees.
- ✔ In situations where it is not safe or feasible to provide access to shade (e.g., during high winds), a note will be made of these unsafe or unfeasible conditions and alternative procedures will be used to provide access to shade upon request. (Below, describe the alternative procedure for access to shade.)
- ✔ For non-agricultural employers, cooling measures other than shade (e.g., use of misting machines) are provided in lieu of shade if these measures are demonstrably as effective as shade in allowing employees to cool and of the steps that will be taken to provide alternative cooling measures, but with equivalent protection as shade.

Procedures for Monitoring the Weather:

- ✔ The supervisor will be trained and instructed to check in advance the extended weather forecast. Weather forecasts can be checked with the aid of the internet (www.nws.noaa.gov/), by calling the National Weather Service phone numbers (see CA numbers below), or by checking the Weather Channel TV Network. The work schedule will be planned in advance, taking into consideration whether high temperatures or a heat wave is expected. This type of advanced planning should take place whenever the temperature is expected to reach 70 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

For further information please contact SDRMA Chief Risk Officer Dennis Timoney at dtimoney@sdrma.org.

www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/HeatIllnessInfo.html.



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