



HEAT SAFETY TIPS IN THE WORKPLACE

The N.C. Division of Public Health encourages employers and workers to be keenly observant of safety precautions during exceptionally high temperatures in North Carolina. During the hot summer months, those who work outside and in certain indoor jobs are at increased risk of heat-related illness.

Health problems can range from cramps and rashes to heat exhaustion and more deadly, heat stroke. Especially vulnerable worker-groups include those employed in construction, agriculture, and certain manufacturing sectors.

Employers and workers are urged to pay attention to the following recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce heat-related illness:

Employer Recommendations:

- Train workers and supervisors to prevent, recognize, and treat heat illness; conduct safety committee meetings during heat spells.
- Remind workers to drink proper fluids like water and juice before work and throughout the day, not just when they are thirsty.
- Establish work/rest schedules appropriate for current heat indices.
- Ensure that workers have access to shade.
- Manage work activities like scheduling heavy work for cooler hours if possible and rotate workers.
- Monitor temperatures and workers during hot conditions.
- Provide PROMPT medical attention to any worker who shows signs of heat stroke; the first step is to get the worker out of the heat!

Worker Recommendations:

- Know the signs of heat-related illness. Initial symptoms include:
 - excessive sweating, tiredness, poor concentration, and headache
- If you are new to working in the heat, tell your supervisor.
- Get out of the sun or find a cool place when you start to overheat.
- Drink plenty of water and juice – no caffeine or high sugar drinks - before and throughout the work day. Avoid alcohol during off-time.
- Know the location of the closest drinking water supplies.
- Use a buddy system and check on co-workers.
- After work, take a cold bath or shower to cool down.

For more information on heat illness, visit

http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp