Heat Stress/Working Outside

Heat-Related Illness
Heat-related illnesses come about when one’s body temperature surpasses normal levels. These heights in body temperature lead people to struggle when performing simple tasks and can eventually cause harm to the liver and muscles. It is important to understand and be aware of the following:

- **Heat Stress** – When too much heat is absorbed by a person. This can be caused by level of physical activity, the temperature and amount of clothing worn.
- **Heat Strain** – This is how the body reacts to heat stress. An example would be sweating.
- **Heat Stroke** – This is often triggered by dehydration and is when the body’s temperature is abnormally high. This is a medical emergency and, if not dealt with properly, could be fatal. Symptoms include fainting, confusion, stumbling, sweating and even seizures.
- **Heat Exhaustion** – This often occurs before heat stroke. Symptoms are similar and include headache, feeling queasy, intense sweating and extreme thirst.
- **Heat Cramps** – These are pains in the muscles that occur while working. They are commonly in the legs, arms and back.
- **Heat Syncope** – This comes from being dehydrated and standing for a long period or an abrupt rising from a seated position. Symptoms include feeling light headed/dizzy and potentially fainting.
- **Heat Rash** – This is when itchy, irritated blisters/patches on the skin begin to form from extreme sweating. It is commonly found on the neck, chest, armpits, elbows and behind the knees.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms be sure to get medical help immediately.

Heat-Related Illness Prevention
It is ideal that management creates a plan to further prevent these illnesses through less exposure to heat hazards. This includes employers making decisions on whether temperature conditions are suitable to be worked in. The main way to reduce these illnesses from occurring is to reduce the overall heat stress on site. These following engineering controls should be put in to place:

- Air conditioning
- Increased ventilation
- Cooling fans
- Run exhaust ventilation where heat is created
- Reflective shields to divert heat
- Insulate surfaces that are hot
- Stop leaking steam
- Shade for outdoor working environments

If these controls are not enough, there are additional administrative ones:

- Accustom new employees to the heat conditions
- Accustom workers again after an extended period of absence
- Schedule work at a time during the day when it is coolest
- Implement rest schedules
- Reduce high-intensity work
- Call in relief workers when necessary
If both engineering and administrative controls are not enough, PPE controls can help:

- Fire proximity suits
- Water-cooled clothing
- Air-cooled clothing
- Cooling vests
- Wetted-over clothing
- Hats
- Light-colored garments
- Sunblock

Source: [https://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_iii/otm_iii_4.html](https://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_iii/otm_iii_4.html)

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**Items Discussed:**

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**Problem Areas or Concerns:**

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**Attendees (Signatures):**

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**Comments:**

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