



Focus Sheet | Heat Stress

for Employees

Protect yourself from the heat.

Do you work outside?

If you work outside during hot weather then you need to protect yourself from the heat. Even in Seattle's famously mild climate you sometimes have to take precautions, especially if you have to wear multiple layers of clothes or waterproof clothing. There are also special training requirements your supervisor must provide if you work outside anytime from May 1 through September 30.

Protect yourself when it gets hot.

Drink plenty of water. If it is really hot and you are working hard you may have to drink up to an extra gallon of water per day.

Take rest breaks in a cool place.

If you feel ill; tell someone, get help, and get out of the heat.

When it's hot take advantage of any engineering controls such as misting fans and procedures, such as additional rest periods that are available to you. They should be listed in your department's Health and Safety Plan.

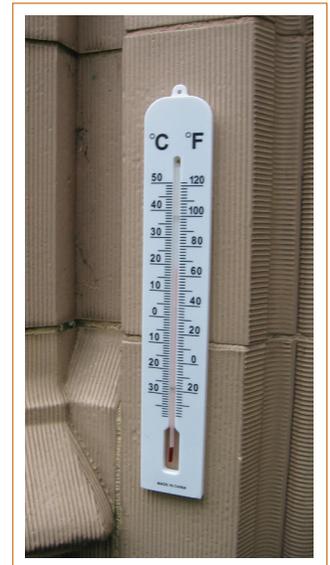
Take special precautions:

- Anytime the temperature is over 89° F.
- If you are wearing two layers of clothing, like coveralls over street clothes, take the extra precautions if the temperature exceeds 77° F.
- If you are wearing vapor barrier clothing, like a rain suit take them if the temperature is over 52° F.
- Watch your coworkers for signs of heat sickness.

Departments and supervisors have roles too.

Your department must make sure their health and safety plan addresses working in hot environments. The plan must describe their program to reduce the risk of heat related illnesses, including a description of their training, who gets trained and what special procedures and equipment to use when it gets hot.

If your department uses Hazard Review Checklists they should have heat stress checked on the form as a potential hazard.



Rest in the shade and drink plenty of water

Focus Sheet | Heat Stress

Each employee who works outside must be trained about the hazards of heat exposure. EH&S has example training modules supervisors can use to cover all required points. The training must include:

- The health effects of excessive heat exposure, including heat cramps, heat rash, heat exhaustion, fainting, and heat stroke.
- Environmental factors that increase the risk of heat related illness, including air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat from the sun or other sources, conductive heat sources such as the ground, air movement, workload and duration, and personal protective equipment.

You may have some personal factors that may increase your chance of getting a heat-related illness. These individual factors include, your age, if you are used to working in hot conditions, some medical conditions, how much water you drink, how much alcohol you drink, caffeine and nicotine use, and taking some medications. There might be some other factors that make you more likely to get sick from the heat.

Supervisors must know all this plus what to do if an employee starts get sick from the heat and how to get emergency medical help.

Remember: *Drink Water and Rest in a Cool Place*

Need more help?

Just give EH&S a call at (206) 543-7388 or for help training check out:
www.ehs.washington.edu/ohs/heat.ppt

Environmental Health & Safety
201 Hall Health Center Box 354400
Seattle, Washington 98195-4400
206.543.0465 FAX 206.543.3351
www.ehs.washington.edu

For copies of this and other EH&S focus sheets, visit www.ehs.washington.edu or call 206.543.7262.

