

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

April 2016

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION



**WATER.
REST.
SHADE.**

*The work can't get done
without them.*

Summertime is around the corner—along with rising temperatures. Prepare outdoor workers *before* the heat hits and help prevent heat-related illness.

Heat Stress Symptoms

(Listed in order of severity)

- Decreased energy
- Light-headedness
- Flush or pale skin
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Rapid or shallow breathing
- Profuse sweating
- Confusion
- Muscle cramps
- Vomiting
- Dry skin, no sweating
- Fainting

Take Action

If someone is experiencing any sign of heat illness—take action! Here's what to do when symptoms arise:

- If you are experiencing *early* signs of heat illness, drink more fluids and get out of the sun. Sports drinks can help replenish electrolytes.
- Remove excess clothing layers.
- Move to a cool place if symptoms worsen.
- Pour cool water over the affected person. (You can use ice packs to help cool them off.)
- Lay down and raise feet.
- Call 911 if the victim is vomiting, has fainted or shows signs of confusion, aggression or any strange behavior.

Prevent Heat Illness

Here are some ways you can prepare and prevent heat illness from occurring:

- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting and lightweight clothing.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and neck from sun exposure.
- Wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or more. Reapply often—it *does* wear off!
- Drink plenty of water, and often. Don't wait until you're thirsty or are showing signs of dehydration.
- Do the most strenuous tasks early in the day when it's cooler. Avoid overexertion during the hottest parts of the day.
- Adapt to the heat—slowly acclimate to the heat by gradually spending more time outside each day.

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

1. Training

Train all employees and supervisors about heat illness prevention.

2. Water

Provide enough fresh water so that each employee can drink at least 1 quart per hour, *and encourage them to do so.*

3. Shade

Provide access to shade and encourage employees to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least 5 minutes. *They should not wait until they feel sick to cool down.*

4. Planning

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



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Keep a copy of this bulletin in your Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) binder and be sure employees receive a copy.