

# HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION: HIGH HEAT

## INTRODUCTION

It is always important to take care of your health while working in the heat by drinking water and taking breaks, but when the temperature gets to 95 degrees F, also known as “high heat”, you need to take extra precautions to prevent heat illness and death.

## COMMUNICATION

Effective communication with someone else, usually a supervisor, is required for high heat conditions. “Effective communication” means:

- Within the range of voice or observation
- By electronic means, such as a walkie-talkie
  - Cell phones or instant messaging devices are only allowed if reception is reliable in the area

Communication is important for several reasons, including:

- Being able to ask for help if you or someone else feels sick
- Having people check up on you and be able to make sure nothing is wrong
  - If you don't answer, they know to come check on you
- The supervisor being able to remind you to drink water or take a break



## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

To avoid heat illness or worse during high heat:

- Drink about four 8-oz cups per hour during hot weather
  - That's how much your body loses when you sweat
  - Know where the water is located
  - Do NOT drink too much water: “too much” is usually about 48 cups in a 24 hour period
- If possible, start work earlier in the day when it's coolest
- Try to do the heaviest jobs during the cooler hours of the morning or late afternoon when the sun is down
- Wear light colors and loose clothing to allow the body to breathe
- Get help if you are experiencing the symptoms of heat illnesses
- Rest in the shade when you need it
- If you are new, be sure someone is supervising you for the first 14 days until you are acclimatized (used to) the high heat



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## HELPING COWORKERS

- Know the signs and symptoms of heat illness, including:
  - Cramps
  - Scaly, red, itchy or burning skin
  - Hyperventilation
  - Dizziness
  - Headache
  - Nausea
  - Confusion
  - Strange Behavior
  - Seizure
- Use the buddy system
  - Watch your partner for symptoms of heat illness, and they will watch out for you
  - If your partner is suffering from heat illness, help them out
- If your coworker is showing severe signs of heat illness, contact emergency personnel
- Know how to describe your location to emergency personnel before an emergency



## CONCLUSION

Working in the heat could be hazardous and is especially so in weather of 95 degrees or hotter. Be sure to drink enough water, take shade breaks, and keep in communication with your supervisor or a partner so you can avoid heat illness and death for you or your coworkers.

