



*Helping to make your workplace a safe place*  
[www.MySafetyPoint.com](http://www.MySafetyPoint.com)

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

### **Protecting Workers from Effects of Rising Temperatures**

Summer has arrived, and along with that some potentially dangerous working conditions. Now is a good time to review your Injury and Illness Prevention plan to ensure it addresses Heat Illness Prevention.

Studies show effective reduction of heat illness depends on written procedures, access to water, access to cooler areas, acclimatization and weather monitoring, emergency response and employee and supervisor training.

In this Newsletter we will address cause and effect, as well as solutions to reducing heat injury in your workplace.

[www.AutomotiveSafetyAssociation.com](http://www.AutomotiveSafetyAssociation.com)  
Your source for One-Click Access to Loss  
Control Documentation

Information and materials attained from  
MySafetyPoint.com; CalOSHA and LOHP

## **Factors Leading to Heat Stress**

High temperature and humidity; direct sun or heat; limited air movement; physical exertion; poor physical condition; some medicines; inadequate tolerance for hot workplaces; and insufficient water intake can all lead to heat stress.

### **What kind of heat disorders and health effects are possible and how should they be treated?**

- **Heat Stroke** is the most serious heat related disorder and occurs when the body's temperature regulation fails and body temperature rises to critical levels. It is a medical emergency that may result in death. The primary signs and symptoms of heat stroke are confusion; irrational behavior; loss of consciousness; convulsions; a lack of sweating (usually); hot, dry skin; and an abnormally high body temperature. If a worker shows signs of possible heat stroke, professional medical treatment should be obtained immediately. Until professional medical treatment is available, the worker should be placed in a shady, cool area and the outer clothing should be removed. Douse the worker with cool water and circulate air to improve evaporative cooling. Provide the worker fluids (preferably water) as soon as possible.
- **Heat Exhaustion** is only partly due to exhaustion; it is a result of the combination of excessive heat and dehydration. Signs and symptoms are headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, thirst, and giddiness. Fainting or heat collapse is often associated with heat exhaustion. Workers suffering from heat exhaustion should be removed from the hot environment and given fluid replacement. They should also be encouraged to get adequate rest, and when possible, ice packs should be applied.
- **Heat Cramps** are usually caused by performing hard physical labor in a hot environment. Heat cramps have been attributed to an electrolyte imbalance caused by sweating and are normally caused by the lack of water replenishment. It is imperative that workers in hot environments drink water every 15 to 20 minutes and also drink carbohydrate-electrolyte replacement liquids (e.g., sports drinks) to help minimize physiological disturbances during recovery.
- **Heat Rashes** are the most common problem in hot work environments where the skin is persistently wetted by unevaporated sweat. Heat rash looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters. It is more likely to occur on the neck and upper chest, in the groin, under the breasts, and in elbow creases. The best treatment for heat rash is to provide a cooler, less humid environment. Keep the affected area dry. Dusting powder may be used to increase comfort, but avoid using ointments or creams—they keep the skin warm and moist and may make the condition worse.

Article continued on page 2...



## **AUTOMOTIVE SAFETY ASSOCIATION (ASA)**

Patrick Prendiville; Administrator  
24661 Del Prado, Suite 3, Dana Point, CA 92629  
877-487-9696 office • 877-532-7238 fax  
[www.AutomotiveSafetyAssociation.com](http://www.AutomotiveSafetyAssociation.com)

Please direct all questions  
regarding the association to the  
administrative assistant, Judy Noecker  
[Judy@PrendivilleAgency.com](mailto:Judy@PrendivilleAgency.com)

## Why is it important to prevent heat illness?

Heat illness can be a matter of life and death. Workers die from heat stroke every summer and every death is preventable. When heat stroke doesn't kill immediately, it can shut down major body organs causing acute heart, liver, kidney and muscle damage, nervous system problems, and blood disorders. Workers suffering from heat exhaustion are at greater risk for accidents, since they are less alert and can be confused.

## Important Facts to Discuss with Employees:

1. It's better to drink small amounts frequently, as opposed to larger amounts less often.
2. When the temperatures climb, drink even if you don't feel thirsty.
3. Avoid drinks like sodas or coffee that have caffeine. These drinks dehydrate you and can make it more dangerous to work in the heat. Also avoid sports drinks as these contain too much sugar.
4. People worry that if they drink a lot of water, they'll have to go to the bathroom more often. The fact is, you'll mostly sweat it off. When you're not at work, still drink plenty of water to help your body recover from the workday.
5. During a heat wave, take more frequent breaks
6. Watch your co-workers for signs of heat exhaustion. Remind your coworkers to drink water or take a break in a cool area. Sometimes people with heat exhaustion get disoriented and think they are okay. If you suspect a problem, keep checking on your co-worker or tell a supervisor.

### How to manage heat exhaustion



1  
Move the patient to lie down in a cool place with circulating air



2  
Loosen tight clothing and remove unnecessary garments



3  
Sponge with cold water



4  
Give cool water to drink if conscious



5  
Seek medical aid if patient vomits or does not recover promptly

## Administrative or work practice controls to offset heat effects

- **Acclimatize workers** by exposing them to work in a hot environment for progressively longer periods.
- **Replace fluids** by providing cool water or any cool liquid (except alcoholic and caffeinated beverages) to workers and encourage them to drink small amounts frequently, e.g., one cup every 20 minutes. Ample supplies of liquids should be placed close to the work area.
- **Reduce the physical demands** by reducing physical exertion such as excessive lifting.
- **Provide recovery areas** such as air-conditioned enclosures and rooms and provide intermittent rest periods with water breaks.
- **Reschedule hot jobs** for the cooler part of the day.
- **Monitor workers** while working at high energy levels. Personal monitoring can be done by checking the heart rate, recovery heart rate, and oral temperature.

### Additional Information

For more information on this, and other health related issues affecting workers, visit OSHA's Web site at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

## AUTOMOTIVE SAFETY ASSOCIATION (ASA)

Patrick Prendiville; Administrator  
24661 Del Prado, Suite 3, Dana Point, CA 92629  
877-487-9696 office • 877-532-7238 fax  
[www.AutomotiveSafetyAssociation.com](http://www.AutomotiveSafetyAssociation.com)

Your source for One-Click Access to Loss Control Documentation

