**Pre-job Safety Topic**

**Heat Stress for Outdoor Workers (Safety talk for an expected high Humidex day)**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Dangers of Heat Stress**

When your body’s cooling system can’t keep up with the heat, the body dehydrates and body temperature rises above 38°C. That’s when heat illnesses can occur. Heat illness has a range of increasingly serious symptoms, beginning with heat rash and muscle cramps, which are warning signs of the onset of more severe heat stress. If no action is taken, symptoms will worsen and the health effects will progress to more severe stages of heat illness that are life threatening, such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

It is often difficult for someone with the onset of heat stress to realize the danger they are in. Therefore it is extremely important that we all watch out for heat stress symptoms in each other, and take action as necessary.

The following heat illnesses are the stages of progression of heat illness.

**Heat Rash**

Skin becomes reddened and may itch, feel prickly or hurt.

First Aid: Fluid replacement and rest

**Heat cramps**

Muscle cramping due to overheating of the body and dehydration

First Aid: Drink cool water. Rest in a cool environment.

**Heat Exhaustion**

Heat exhaustion is when the body cannot keep blood flowing both to vital organs and to the skin for cooling.Signs are rapid heartbeat, heavy sweating, extreme weakness or fatigue, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, irritability, fast and shallow breathing, breathlessness, headache, difficulty continuing work and a slightly elevated body temperature.

First Aid:Get medical aid and cool down (move to a shaded area, loosen clothing, drink cool water). Drink plenty of water or other cool beverages if able. Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath or use alcohol wipes. It takes time to cool the body down from heat exhaustion, and if it’s not treated promptly, it can lead to heat stroke.

**Heat Stroke**

A condition that occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature, and can lead to death or permanent disability. Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Your body has used up all its water and salt and cannot cool itself. Your body temperature rises to dangerous levels.

Symptoms are confusion and irrational behaviour, convulsions or loss of coordination, unconsciousness, no sweating—hot, dry skin, high body temperature—40°C or more, throbbing headache

First Aid: Request immediate emergency medical assistance. Take aggressive steps to cool the worker down. Move the worker to a cool, shaded area. Remove excess clothing and apply cool water or alcohol wipes to the body. Immerse in cool water if able. Encourage worker to drink fluids if able.

**How can we protect ourselves?**

Here’s how to avoid heat stress. Six simple steps:

1. Know the signs and symptoms of heat stress

2. Watch out for symptoms in yourself and others

3. Wear sunscreen, a hat, and lightweight, loose-fitting clothing

4. Drink water often – avoid drinks with alcohol and caffeine

5. Take breaks in the shade and more often on hot days

6. Know how your workplace deals with heat stress

Additional attendance and comments:

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