



HOT WEATHER & SAFE WORK

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions on the job site.

Our bodies have a natural system in place to keep us cool when the heat is cranked up. You never have to think about it, but as the temperature rises your body starts to do all sorts of things automatically to regulate your temperature – like sweating, decreasing blood flow to certain areas, and collecting moisture in other areas. Unfortunately, when the system gets overloaded, it starts to break down, and the first sign of this is a condition called **Heat Exhaustion**.

To prevent heat related illnesses here are a few safety reminders:

- ✓ Have workers take breaks and rest in cool shady areas as needed
- ✓ If possible, adjust work tasks and work hours to conduct strenuous work tasks during cooler parts of the day
- ✓ Take frequent water breaks to rehydrate
- ✓ Wear light-colored loose-fitting clothing

Heat Exhaustion is the first stage of a heat related problem – and if you watch your co-workers closely during the day you can usually see it coming on through these symptoms:

- ✓ Cool, clammy skin.
- ✓ Fatigue and weakness.
- ✓ Dizziness and headache.
- ✓ Nausea, vomiting, or a dry mouth.
- ✓ Muscle cramps.

If you see a teammate with those symptoms, have them take a break with a cold drink in an air-conditioned room, pickup truck, or just in the shade of a tree for at least 30 minutes – but maybe longer if they don't start feeling better.

Heat Exhaustion is serious – but you can normally take care of it if you spot the problem early enough. By far the most dangerous thing about Heat Exhaustion is that if you don't deal with it, it just gets worse – and when it gets worse people can end up with a life-threatening condition called **Heat Stroke**.

A person suffering from Heat Stroke will normally have some (but maybe not all) of the following symptoms:

- ✓ No sweating.
- ✓ Very high temperature and hot, dry skin.
- ✓ Deep breathing and dilated pupils.
- ✓ Confusion or delirium.
- ✓ Convulsions or loss of consciousness.

Heat Stroke can kill people if it isn't treated immediately. The most important thing you can do is to get the person cooled off as quickly as possible by whatever means you have available. Pour water on them,

put ice packs on them, put them in an air-conditioned vehicle. Call an ambulance immediately anytime a co-worker suffers from Heat Stroke. You might just save their life. **So just remember** – when the heat is on, keep an eye on yourself and an eye on your teammates. It's much better to catch a problem early if you see it coming.

Toolbox Attendance

Questions? _____

Concerns? _____

Days since Last Incident: _____

Supervisor/Meeting Leader: _____ Date: _____

Signatures of attendees:

Manager review comments: _____

Manager signature: _____ Date of Review: _____