SAFETY TOOLBOX

MONTHLY SAFETY AWARENESS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Heat Prevention

Instructions:
Use this Safety Toolbox Talk to spark discussion within the employee group. Test knowledge retention with the associated quiz.

Introductory Comments

Millions of U.S. workers are exposed to heat in their workplaces. Although illness from exposure to heat is preventable, every year, thousands become sick from occupational heat exposure, and some cases are fatal. Heat can also increase the risk of injuries in workers as it may result in sweaty palms, fogged-up safety glasses, and dizziness. Burns may also occur because of accidental contact with hot surfaces or steam. (www.osha.gov)

Meeting Starter Questions

- What should be included in a Heat Illness Prevention Plan?
- What is appropriate hydration for workers?
- How can you reduce your risk of heat related illness?

Critical Safety Points

Planning and Supervision

Heat-related illness can affect workers in many industries, at indoor or outdoor worksites. Some job-related risk factors include:

- Outdoor work in warm weather,
- Heat sources such as ovens, fires, or hot tar,
- Heavy or non-breathable work clothes

When these or other hazards are present, employers should plan to protect workers.

Creation of a Heat Illness Prevention Plan

Employers should create a written plan to prevent heat-related illness. Important elements to consider when creating the heat plan are:

- Who will provide oversight daily?
- How will new workers gradually develop heat tolerance?
- Temporary workers may be more susceptible to heat and require closer supervision.
- Workers returning from extended leave (typically defined as more than two weeks) may also be at increased risk.

- How will the employer ensure that first aid is adequate and the protocol for summoning medical assistance in situations beyond first aid is effective?
- What engineering controls and work practices will be used to reduce heat stress?
- How will heat stress be measured?
- How to respond when the National Weather Service issues a heat advisory or heat warning?
- How will we determine if the total heat stress is hazardous?
- What training will be provided to workers and supervisors?

Prevention

Heat-related illnesses can be prevented. Prevention requires employers and workers to recognize heat hazards. Management should commit to:

- Take extra precautions to protect new workers.
- Train supervisors and workers to control and recognize heat hazards.
- Determine, for each worker throughout each workday, whether total heat stress is too high, both from the conditions of that day and recognizing carryover effect possibilities.
- Implement engineering and administrative controls to reduce heat stress.
- Provide sufficient rest, shade, and fluids.

Hydration

Employers should provide the means for appropriate hydration for workers.

- If in the heat <2 hours and involved in moderate work activities, drink 1 cup (8 oz.) of water every 15–20 minutes.
- During prolonged sweating lasting several hours, drink sports drinks containing balanced electrolytes.
- Avoid alcohol and drinks with high caffeine or sugar.
- Generally, fluid intake should not exceed 6 cups per hour.

Rest Breaks

Employers should ensure and encourage workers to take appropriate rest breaks to cool down and hydrate.

- Permit rest and water breaks when a worker feels heat discomfort.
- Modify work/rest periods to give the body a chance to get rid of excess heat.
- Assign new and unacclimatized workers lighter work and longer, more frequent rest periods.
- Shorten work periods and increase rest periods:
    - As temperature, humidity, and sunshine increase.
    - When there is no air movement.
    - If protective clothing or equipment is worn.

Employee Name:	Signature:
Division:	Date:
Instructor:	Score:

Heat Prevention- Part 2

Question 1: Heat can also increase the risk of injuries in workers as it may result in sweaty palms, fogged-up safety glasses, and dizziness.

☐ TRUE ☐FALSE

Question 2: Employers should create a written plan to prevent heat-related illness.

☐ TRUE ☐FALSE

Question 3: Heat-related illnesses can be prevented. Prevention requires employers and workers to recognize heat hazards.

☐ TRUE ☐FALSE

Question 4: If in the heat <2 hours and involved in moderate work activities, drink 1 cup (8 oz.) of water every 15–20 minutes.

☐ TRUE ☐FALSE

Quiz Answer Key:
1. TRUE
2. TRUE
3. TRUE
4. TRUE