



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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Prevent Heat & Stress Illnesses at Work



Well... **Guess what?** We made it through the coldest winter overall that many folks can remember. There were articles in the papers back in the fall relating to the fact that even though there would be no "EL Nino" or "El Nina," from the Ohio valley down through the alluvial Miss. Valley, the winter would be warmer than normal. This only proves one point: In my opinion, the #1 Jefe (boss) up stairs is still in charge. Predictions are only what they are- predictions, as God still controls it all.

We need and have to have the heat and sun to allow our crops to grow and thrive, but at the same time we need to respect them by taking precautions to help protect us.

Factors That Cause Heat Illnesses-

- ~ Temperature
- ~ Humidity
- ~ Amount of Air Movement
- ~ Physical Activity
- ~ Radiant temperature of surroundings

Heat Stress Can Be Very Serious-

- ✓ Working outdoors in hot, humid weather can result in **heat stress**. The results of this situation occur when our bodies build up more heat than they can handle.
- ✓ Outside work, like our agricultural work, with continuous exposure to the sun for long periods during the day makes us susceptible to **heat stress or heat illnesses**.
- ✓ Acute **heat illnesses or heat stress** can be life-threatening, requiring instant medical attention.
- ✓ Knowing the steps to take if a co-worker shows signs of **heat stress** are very advantageous in helping them.

RECOGNITION OF HEAT ILLNESSES:

HEAT STROKE- This is the most serious heat-related disorder, resulting from the body's inability to control its temperature.

- The body temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails and the body is unable to cool down.
- When heat stroke occurs- The body temperature can rise from 106° F. or higher in 10 to 15 minutes.
- Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Heat Stroke Symptoms-

- ~ Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- ~ Chills
- ~ Hallucinations
- ~ Slurred speech
- ~ High body temperature
- ~ Confusion, dizziness
- ~ Throbbing headache

First Aid for Heat Stroke Victims-

- ~ Call 9-1-1 & notify their supervisor.
- ~ Move the victim to a cool shaded area.
- ~ Cool the victim down by the following:
- ~ Soak their clothing with water.
- ~ Spray, sponge, or shower them with water or fan them.

HEAT EXHAUSTION- Results from the body's response to excessive loss of water and salt through excessive sweating. Occurs mainly in the elderly, those with high blood pressure and those working in hot environments.

- ~ Heavy sweating
- ~ Nausea
- ~ Extreme weakness or fatigue
- ~ Clammy, moist skin
- ~ Dizziness, confusion
- ~ Muscle cramps
- ~ Pale or flushed complexion
- ~ Fast/shallow breathing
- ~ Slightly elevated body temperature

First Aid for Heat Exhaustion Victims-

- ✓ Have them rest in a cool, shaded, or air-conditioned area.
- ✓ Have them drink plenty of water or other cool, non-alcoholic beverages.
- ✓ Have them take a cool bath, shower, or sponge bath.

HEAT SYNCOPE- This results from a fainting (syncope) episode, usually occurring with prolonged standing or sudden rising from a sitting or lying position. Factors that contribute to heat syncope are dehydration and lack of acclimatization.

Heat Syncope Symptoms-

- ~ Light-headedness
- ~ Dizziness
- ~ Fainting

First Aid for Heat Syncope-

- ~ Victim should lie or sit down in a cool place when they begin to feel these symptoms.
- ~ Drink water, clear juices or a sports beverage slowly.

HEAT CRAMPS- This results from extreme sweating involving strenuous activities. Sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture levels. Low salt levels in muscles causes painful cramps. Heat cramps can also be a symptom of heat exhaustion.

Heat Cramps Symptoms-

Muscle pain or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs.

First Aid for Heat Cramp Victims-

- ✓ Stop all activity and sit in a cool place.
- ✓ Drink clear juice or sports beverage
- ✓ Abort the work schedule for a few hours to let the cramps subside. Further exertion can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- ✓ Seek medical attention if one of the following should surface:
 - ~ Victim experiences heart problems
 - ~ Victim is on a low-sodium diet

HEAT RASH- This is a skin irritation, resulting from excessive sweating during hot, humid weather.

Heat Rash Symptoms-

- Clusters of red pimples or small blisters.
- Most likely location is the neck, upper chest, groins, under the breasts and elbow creases.

First Aid for Heat Rash Victims-

- Try to work in a cooler, less humid environment, when possible.
- Keep the affected area dry – dusting powder can be used to increase your comfort.

Workers should wear the following for Extra Protection-

- Light colored, light weight, loose-fitting breathable clothing, like cotton and avoid synthetic clothing fabrics.
- Schedule heavy work in the cool parts of the day
- Drink water regularly and avoid alcoholic, sweet and caffeine laden drinks.
- Gradually build up to a hot weather schedule.