

# Heat-Related Illnesses

INFORMATION & RESOURCES ON HOW TO AVOID HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Heat-related illnesses can be an issue outdoors when temperatures and humidity rise, however, it can also be a hazard for those who work in extreme temperatures indoors such as commercial kitchens and boiler rooms. It is important to know the signs, symptoms and precautions that should be taken as heat stroke can be deadly.

Heat-Related Illness	Symptoms	Action Needed
<b>Heat Rash</b>	Skin Irritation, Cluster of Red Bumps or Blisters	Move to a cool place and keep area dry.
<b>Heat Cramps</b>	Muscle Spasms, Abdominal and Extremity Pain, Mild Nausea	Move to a cool place and drink water.
<b>Heat Exhaustion</b>	Heavy Sweating, Cold/Clammy Skin, Dizziness, Headache, Weakness, Nausea, Vomiting, Fainting	Move to a cool place and sip on water. Apply cooling packs or wet cloths to face, neck and arms. Seek help as condition could still turn into heat stroke.
<b>Heat Stroke</b>	Hot/Dry Red Skin, Rapid Pulse, High Body Temperature, Rapid Breathing, Loss of Consciousness	Call 911 immediately. Quickly move the person to a cool place and apply cooling packs or cool, wet cloths to their neck, wrists, ankles and armpits. Do not let them gulp or chug water.

While there is no specific PESH/OSHA standard to protect workers from high working temperatures, heat illnesses are a recognized hazard and the agencies can enforce workplace controls using the General Duty Clause. Depending on conditions and symptoms employees are experiencing, a severe heat related situation could be considered imminent danger.

Workers are at greatest risk of heat illnesses when high temperatures are combined with high relative humidity, commonly referred to as the heat index. Download OSHA’s Heat Index Application to check specific situations.

Heat Index	Risk Level	Protective Measures
Less than 91°F	Lower (Caution)	Basic heat safety and planning
91°F to 103°F	Moderate	Implement precautions and heighten awareness
103°F to 115°F	High	Additional precautions to protect workers
Greater than 115°F	Very High to Extreme	Triggers even more aggressive protective measures

## WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD DO

- Train employees to recognize signs and symptoms of heat illness and proper first aid treatment.
- Use the OSHA-NIOSH heat safety tool app to assist in monitoring working conditions.
- Schedule the highest physical activities when the temperatures are cooler.
- When hot weather starts, begin activities in shorter time periods until workers are used to the heat.
- Rotate workers through the highest effort work activities.
- Shade work areas, provide rest areas where shade is available, and have air conditioning or cooling devices when possible.
- Provide rest breaks at a frequency to prevent signs of heat illness.
- Have employees moved to rest areas at the first signs of heat illness and provide first aid treatment.
- Provide water and electrolyte drinks.
- Provide sunscreen to prevent sunburns.
- Provide cooling cloths and head wraps and cooled water to soak them in.
- Provide hats to reduce direct contact with the sun, avoid hard hats that trap heat near the head when there are no overhead hazards.

### NY SUN SAFETY LAW

Any state employee who spends more than a total of five hours per week outdoors shall be provided information about:

- the potential dangers of diseases caused by over-exposure of the sun, such as skin cancer,
- the existence of available protections and their proper uses,
- any other information necessary to afford an employee his or her best opportunity to protect themselves from the sun.

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. Skin cancer can occur at any age and can almost always be cured with early detection. Examine your body monthly and see a medical professional if any skin changes occur.

For more information and resources visit:

[www.cseany.org/safety](http://www.cseany.org/safety)



Follow the CSEA Safety Net on:

CSEA has been winning the fight for safe and healthy working conditions for over 100 years, yet there is more to be done. Hazards old and new- from Asbestos to Zika- remain a threat to workers every day. CSEA will not back down from the fight and nothing is more important than saving lives and keeping workers free from injury. Your help is needed now more than ever.

*The life you save could be YOUR OWN.*



Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO