



Working in Hot Weather or Hot Workplace Environments

Subject: Procedures and Guidelines for Working in Hot Environments

Applies to: All employees

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APPLICATION:

This procedure applies to any worker who may work in hot weather or hot workplace environments. The following parameters will serve as triggers to implement this procedure:

- When the Humidex reaches or exceeds 35, or
- When air temperature reaches 32°C or higher.

These parameters will also serve as indicators for the measurements of workplace temperatures and Humidex are to be determined every 30 minutes to aid in administering proper controls.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

All University employees who are required to perform work in hot environments must be familiar with and comply with this work procedure. Supervisors must ensure proper work practices, administrative and engineering controls and applicable measures in this work procedure are implemented for the protection of workers.

TRAINING REQUIRED:

Supervisors must ensure that workers are provided with training. Worker will be able to:

1. Recognize causes, signs and symptoms of stress and heat induced illness (sunburn, contact burns, fatigue, distraction, etc.)
2. Identify factors that increase the risk of heat induced illness including medications, medical conditions etc.
3. Understand controls and preventative measures of heat induced illness.
4. Identify first aid response and procedure for getting medical attention for heat induced illness.

Refresher training should happen annually. Training will be offered by Occupational Health and Safety in the spring of each year.

PROCEDURE:

1. As a practical applied process, the supervisor must adhere to the following procedure when assigning work, to determine what controls need to be implemented and communicated with worker(s):

- a) Use a regular thermometer and an accurate humidity meter
- b) Measure the actual air temperature

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d) Classify the work:

Examples

- x If the worker is experienced on the job, their time in hot environments must be limited to 50% of the shift on the first day, 60% of the shift on the second day, and 80% of the shift on the third day. On the fourth day a full shift can be worked.
- x If the worker is not experienced on the job, they should spend 20% of their time working in hot conditions on the first day and increase their time by 20% each subsequent day.

5. When applicable, reduction of physical demands of work tasks should be done through mechanical assistance where possible (hoist, carts, etc.).

6. Workers will be provided with water or other fluids and be reminded to drink a cup approximately every 20 minutes.

7. Workers should take more frequent and longer breaks if possible in shaded and cooler areas.

8. Workers with heat stress symptoms will receive first aid care and referred to Workplace Health if necessary based on symptoms and severity of their heat stress.

To review the WSIB Heat Stress Awareness Guide, please click on this link:

<http://www.wsib.on.ca/files/Content/PreventionHSGuide/HeatStressGuide.pdf>



