

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM



**CITY OF REEDLEY
HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION**

I. Policy

Employees who work in outdoor places of employment or on job tasks in other areas when environmental risk factors for heat illness are present or at risk for developing heat illnesses if they do not take adequate precautions. It is the policy of the City of Reedley to protect employees at risk for heat illness by controlling, to the extent possible, the risk factors that can lead to heat illness and developing employee and supervisor awareness of heat illness prevention and response. All employees who are at risk from heat illness are expected to comply with the procedures in this program and in the Injury and Illness Prevention Program.

II. Scope

This program applies to all outdoor places of employment at those times when the environmental risk factors for heat illness are present. This written program is based on the California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3395.

III. Definitions

Environmental Risk Factors for Heat Illness

Working conditions that create the possibility that heat illness could occur, including air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat from the sun and other sources, conductive heat sources such as the ground, air movement, workload severity and duration, protective clothing and personnel protective equipment worn by employees.

Heat Illness

A serious medical condition resulting from the body's inability to cope with a particular heat load and includes heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat syncope, and heat stroke.

Personal Risk Factors for Heat Illness

Factors such as an individual's age, degree of acclimatization, health, water consumption, alcohol consumption, caffeine consumption, and use of prescription medications that affect the body's water retention or other physiological responses to heat.

Preventative Recovery Period

A period of time to recover from the heat in order to prevent heat illness.

Shade

Blockage of direct sunlight.

Canopies, umbrellas, and other temporary structures or devices may be used to provide shade. One indicator that blockage is sufficient is when objects do not cast a shadow in the area of blocked sunlight. Shade is not adequate when heat in the area of shade defeats

the purpose of shade, which is to allow the body to cool. For example, a car sitting in the sun does not provide acceptable shade to a person inside it, unless the car is running with air conditioning on. Shade must not cause exposure to another hazard. Therefore, the shade requirement cannot be met by using areas underneath mobile equipment, like a tractor.

IV. Responsibilities

The City of Reedley Safety Committee is responsible for:

1. Preparing and maintaining a written program that complies with the requirements of applicable Cal/OSHA requirements.
2. Assisting with training to all potentially impacted employees and their supervisors on the risks and prevention of heat illness, including how to recognize symptoms and respond when they appear.
3. Directors and Managers are responsible for the effective implementation of this program in order to ensure the safety of their employees.
4. Ultimately, it will be the responsibility of each individual employee to recognize his/her limitations and the warning signs from the body to know when it is time to stop working and seek shade and assistance.

Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Identifying all employees who are required to work outdoors where potential heat illness could occur.
2. Encouraging affected employees to consume small amounts of water frequently when the environmental risk factors for heat illness are present.
3. Encourage employees to take preventative recovery periods whenever necessary in adequate shaded area.
4. Ensuring all affected employees has received proper training on heat illness prevention.
5. Ensuring the requirements in this document is followed.
6. Contacting emergency medical services in the event medical assistance is required.

Affected employees are responsible for:

1. Complying with the provisions of the Heat Illness Prevention Program, as described in this document and in the training sessions they attend.
2. Consuming small amounts of water frequently at all times when the environmental risk factors for heat illness are present.
3. Taking preventative recovery periods in a shaded area to prevent or recover from heat related symptoms.
4. Reporting heat related illness symptoms to their supervisor.
5. To bring adequate amount of water to the job site for consumption throughout the day.

V. Employer Requirements

A. Provision of Water

Affected employees will have reliable access to potable drinking water to replace fluid lost due to heat and working conditions. It is highly advised that employees bring a jug to store water while working in the field. Jugs should be filled in the morning and again at lunch to last throughout the day.

Supervisors will encourage the frequent drinking of water by employees and will never pressure employees in any way to reduce their consumption of water. Supervisors will ensure water is available to employees at all times and will not establish any practice that allows the water supply to run out or requires an employee to request water before obtaining access.

B. Access to Shade

Employees suffering from heat illness or believing a preventative recovery period is needed are to be provided access to an area with shade that is either open to the air or provided with ventilation or cooling for a period of no less than five minutes. The purpose of the recovery period is prevention of heat illness, and access to shade will be permitted at all times. The preventative recovery period is not a substitute for medical treatment. If an employee has any symptoms of heat illness, first aid procedures should be initiated.

Shaded areas used for preventative recovery periods will allow the employee to assume a comfortable posture and will not cause exposure to another hazard.

Enclosed areas will not be used to provide shade unless it allows cooling comparable to that provided by shade in the open air. Interiors of cars or other vehicles will not be

used for shade unless the vehicle's air conditioning is running, or the vehicle is kept from heating up in the sun in some other way. Interior areas such as metal storage sheds and other out-buildings will not be used for shade unless they provide a cooling environment comparable to shade in open air, meaning they must be mechanically ventilated or open to air movement.

C. Modified Uniforms

During the spring and summer months (*May through September*) modified uniforms may be considered for employees working outside of a building. Modified uniforms shall be approved at the sole discretion and prior approval of the Department Head. Every effort will be made to permit the employee to dress as casually as possible while performing his/her duties in a safe, efficient, and effective manner. Modified uniforms shall be consistent with regular uniforms and in accordance with the City's Image Policy.

D. Training

All employees working on job tasks where environmental risk factors for heat illness are present and their supervisors will receive initial training on preventing and responding to heat illness when this program is first established and annually before working in heat. Supervisors will be trained initially when the program is first established, upon promotion or hire into a supervisory role, and annually thereafter.

Employees

Training will be provided for all employees working on job tasks where environmental factors for heat illness are present prior to being assigned to work tasks. Training will include the following:

- The environmental and personal risk factors for heat illness;
- The agency's procedures for complying with the requirements of this standard;
- The importance of frequent consumption of small quantities of water, up to 4 cups per hour, when the work environment is hot and employees are likely to be sweating more than usual in the performance of their duties;
- The importance of acclimatization;
- The different types of heat illness and the common signs and symptoms of heat illness;
- The importance to employees of immediately reporting to the agency, directly or through the employee's supervisor, symptoms or signs of heat illness in themselves, or in co-workers;
- The agency's procedures for responding to symptoms of possible heat illness, including how emergency medical services will be provided should they become necessary;

- The agency's procedures for contacting emergency medical services, and if necessary, for transporting employees to a point where they can be reached by an emergency medical service provider;
- The agency's procedures for ensuring that, in the event of an emergency, clear and precise direction to the work site can and will be provided as needed to emergency responders.

Supervisors

Supervisors shall receive training on the following topics prior to being assigned to supervise outdoor employees.

- The training information required of the employees, detailed above.
- Procedures the supervisor is to follow to implement the provisions of this program.
- Procedures the supervisor shall follow when an employee exhibits symptoms consistent with possible heat illness, including emergency response procedures.

E. Procedures

Identification of Hazard

City of Reedley Supervisors within Departments will identify all employees, and their supervisors, who are required to work outdoors when the environmental risk factors for heat illness are present. Identification of potentially impacted employees will be made at the department level and notifications will be made to those employees.

The agency will evaluate the actual environmental risk factors each day throughout the year, including:

- Actual weather conditions at the work site, such as temperature, humidity, and sunshine
- Severity and duration of the work to be performed at the site
- Amount of exposure to direct sunlight
- Types of clothing and personal protective equipment used

The agency will consider a variety of means control these risk factors, such as:

- Allowing employees to acclimate to hot weather
- Providing training on the warning signs
- Scheduling outdoor or vigorous work in the cooler parts of the day
- Rotating particularly hot jobs

Reporting

Employees are to promptly report to their immediate supervisor any symptoms of heat illness they, themselves, are experiencing or signs of heat illness they observe in their co-workers. Employees will use an available, effective communication method, such as phoning their supervisor.

Response procedures

Supervisors will be trained to recognize the symptoms of heat illness and to provide an effective response.

As soon as a supervisor becomes aware of an employee with possible heat illness symptoms, the supervisor will take immediate steps to safeguard the employee's well being and to determine the response level needed.

The supervisor will evaluate the employee and their condition to determine to what level the internal first aid system; including dispatching a runner to retrieve the first aid kit, water, or other needed items.

If an employee's condition appears to be severe or the employee's condition does not improve after a recovery period, the supervisor will advise the employee to go to the City of Reedley's worker's compensation designated doctor or call 911 to activate an external emergency medical service (EMS) response. Employees with any of the symptoms of possible serious heat illness will not be sent home or left unattended without medical assessment and authorization from a qualified health care provider.

If the supervisor determines the heat illness affected employee needs to be transported to a location that can be accessed by the EMS provider, the employee will either be transported manually to that location transported or transported by a vehicle, depending on patient condition, distance, work site conditions, and time considerations.

If the supervisor determines external emergency medical response is needed, the supervisor will provide clear and precise directions to the work site and be prepared to provide pertinent information such as cross streets, mile markers, landmarks, and any other information requested by the emergency medical services dispatcher. Employees will be trained to provide the same information if needed.

If able to do so before going to the City's designated doctor, worker's compensation paperwork needs to be filled out. If unable to take care of this prior to the doctor or emergency room visit, it must be completed after treatment.

Appendix A - Tips for Treating Heat-Related Illness

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke happens when the body can no longer control its temperature. The body's temperature rises fast. The body cannot sweat and is unable to cool itself. Warning signs include red, hot, dry skin; very high body temperature, dizziness, nausea, confusion, strange behavior or unconsciousness, rapid pulse or throbbing headache. Heat stroke can cause death or disability if treatment is not given. What to do:

- Get medical help quickly.
- Get the victim to a shady area.
- Cool the person off with a cool shower, garden hose, etc.
- Do not give the victim fluids to drink.
- If emergency medical personnel are delayed, call the hospital for further instructions.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a milder illness that happens when the body has lost too much water and salt in sweat. Warning signs include heavy sweating, cramps, headache, nausea or vomiting, paleness, tiredness, weakness, dizziness and fainting. If heat exhaustion is not treated, it can turn into heat stroke. Get medical help if the symptoms are severe or if the victim has heart problems or high blood pressure. Help the victim cool off with:

- Cool, nonalcoholic beverages,
- Rest, lying down,
- Cool shower, bath or sponge bath,
- Air-conditioning,
- Lightweight clothing.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are muscle pains and spasms due to heavy activity. They usually involve the stomach muscles or the legs. It is generally thought that the loss of water and salt from heavy sweating causes the cramps. If you have heart problems or are on a low-sodium diet, get medical attention for heat cramps. What to do:

- Stop. Sit quietly in a cool place.
- Drink clear juice or a sports beverage.
- Rest for a few hours to avoid heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- Get medical help if heat cramps do not stop after one hour.

Sunburn

Sunburn is when skin becomes red, painful and unusually warm after being in the sun. Sunburn should be avoided because it damages the skin and could lead to more serious illness. What to do:

- See a doctor if the sunburn affects an infant younger than one year old or if the victim has fever, blisters or severe pain.
- Stay out of the sun.

- Bathe the sunburned area with cool water.
- Use moisturizing lotion on sunburn; do not use salve, butter or ointment.
- Do not break blisters.

<http://bepreparedcalifornia.ca.gov/EPO/BeInformed/NaturalDisasters/ExtremeHeat/TipsTreatHeatIllness...> 7/13/2007