

Heat Related Illness Training

This section only applies to employees who may work in hot environments.

Heat illness occurs when our body's ability to keep cool cannot be maintained when working in hot environments. Sweating, which causes evaporation and cooling, may not be adequate in certain conditions. A major problem is that heat illness is often not detected until the body is far along in the progression towards heat stroke.

Many factors other than air temperature can contribute to heat illness. Humidity, clothing, work rate, physical condition, age, medical conditions, caffeine, alcohol, and medications affect heat illness.

Heat illness progresses from heat rash, cramps or exhaustion, to heat stroke. Symptoms include headaches, weakness, exhaustion, muscle spasms, heavy sweating, irritability, confusion, nausea, vomiting, rash or bumps, dizziness, fainting, red or flushed hot dry skin with lack of sweating, rapid breathing, rapid weak pulse and seizures.

Typically, affected people think they are tired or didn't eat well when they could be in serious danger.

Preventing Heat Illness:

- Drink plenty of water throughout the day (1 cup every 15 minutes on average)
 - Know the location of drinking water
 - Bring enough water with you if it is not nearby
 - The supervisor must ensure that water is available or provide adequate water containers for all staff working in the heat
- Get out of direct sunlight when possible
- Remove PPE during breaks
- Whenever possible, work during the cooler parts of the day
- Watch out for yourself and your co-workers
- Slowly build more tolerance to working in the heat

If you or a co-worker is affected:

- Get to a cooler place
- Call 911 if symptoms are serious or if skin is hot and dry
- Notify your supervisor
- Cool the person by:
 - Removing excess clothing
 - Applying cold wet cloths
 - Spraying with cool water
 - Fanning
 - Providing drinking water

Plan your work day in hot weather and be aware of all employees' heat exposure.

*Supervisors must provide and document annual training for all staff that work in hot environments.

The Safety Training Module "Working in the Heat" (Volume 3) is the training module to ensure compliance with this L&I-mandated training requirement.