
Heat safety

In Ohio, we are lucky enough to see the beauty of the four seasons. Snowfall in the winter, blossoms and flowers in the spring, warmth in the summer and changing of the leaves in the fall. But from time to time these seasons can be extreme and we must be prepared to protect ourselves and our employees from these extreme changes. With summer having begun, it is imperative to share with employees the steps to prepare for heat conditions.

One of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) National Emphasis Programs (NEP) is Indoor and Outdoor Heat Hazards. This NEP is a temporary program in which OSHA focuses their resources on those high-hazard industries where heat can be an issue. The NEP encourages employers to protect workers from heat hazards by providing employee access to water, rest, shade, adequate training, and implementing acclimatization procedures for new or returning employees. It contains both enforcement and outreach/compliance assistance components.

When you create a Heat Emphasis Program include at least the following items:

- 1) **Work Practice/Administrative Controls** - Employers should reduce workplace heat stress by using engineering and administrative (work practice) controls. An engineering control could be a change to the design of the workplace that reduces exposure to heat. Administrative controls are changes to tasks or schedules to reduce heat stress.
- 2) **Training** – Develop a program to train workers before hot outdoor work begins and when to identify high heat situations. Tailor the training to worksite conditions whether it is indoor or outdoor work.
- 3) **Acclimatization** - Acclimatization is the result of beneficial physiological adaptations (e.g., increased sweating efficiency, etc.) that occur after gradual increased exposure to a hot environment. In basic terms, this is getting the body prepared to work in hot environments. Additional information on acclimatization can be found at [NIOSH Acclimatization Fact Sheet](#).
- 4) **Hydration** - Employers should provide the means for appropriate hydration of workers. This can include water or electrolytes. For more information on hydration go to [NIOSH Hydration Fact Sheet](#).
- 5) **Rest Breaks** - Employers should ensure and encourage workers to take appropriate rest breaks to cool down and hydrate. There is additional information on the NIOSH website link [NIOSH Work/Rest Schedules Fact Sheet](#).

Make sure you prepare yourself and your employees on heat safety. OSHA has the authority to ask you about a heat program if they are at your facility inspecting other safety items, so it would be wise to prepare, especially if you are in a high hazard industry. If you would like to see the entire heat emphasis program or check to see if you are a high hazard industry click on the following link

https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/enforcement/directives/CPL_03-00-024.pdf

For more information on heat safety go to:

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/heat-nep-factsheet-en.pdf> or

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/recommendations.html#:~:text=Employers%20should%0provide%20a%20heat,steps%20to%20reduce%20the%20risk.>

Contact Sedgwick's Andy Sawan at 330.819.4728 or andrew.sawan@sedgwick.com with any questions.