



ILA-UMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Novel Coronavirus

Workers and Employers Want to Know

Q. Workers and employers have asked the ILA~UMX Joint Safety Committee (JSC): “Your last OSH Circular (2020-06) addressed the subject of “Heat Stress” and spoke of the mandatory wearing of face masks/respirators to mitigate potential Covid-19 infections. Are there any longshore crafts that may be given some relief from wearing face masks/respirators in particularly high heat/high humidity conditions?”

A. The short answer is “yes.” JSC leadership are in agreement and can comfortably take the reasonable position that anyone working within the cab of a vehicle i.e., in isolation; not exposed to the respiratory droplets of other workers, may; in extreme high heat/high humidity conditions¹ dispense with the wearing of a face mask/respirator while so isolated².

With that relief, the JSC cautions that when it is necessary for such workers to interact in close contact³ with others it will become necessary for them to don their face mask/respirator for the complete timeframe of that interaction. Consequently, it will be imperative to have that protective equipment immediately available.

In providing this latitude, and in light of continuing spikes in the infection rates at several relevant geographical areas, the JSC is emphatic in continuing to require all workers to resist the temptation to drop your guard in the wearing of the necessary protection against Covid-19 infection. [22 June 2020]

[Being safe rather than being sorry has great meaning to our situation]

¹ Operating inside a vehicle’s air-conditioned cab is excluded from this policy relaxation.

² All vehicle cabs shall be disinfected after every shift change.

³ The term “close contact” means being within six feet of another worker. Should additional clarity be required, please be in touch with the ILA~UMX Joint Safety Committee at: blueoceana@optonline.net

Working Together For The Benefit Of All

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