



ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

OSH Circular 2024-06 (03 June 2024)



Occupational Heat Stress

As waterfront workers and employers prepare for the Summer of 2024, it's important to anticipate and take account of the inevitable hot temperatures and the accompanying high humidity levels that will occur.

Accordingly, the **ILA-USMX Joint Safety Committee** would like to pass on the following advice and would urge both workers and employers to implement methods and procedures necessary to ensure that no employee (management or labor) is caused to suffer the adverse effects of heat stress.

CAUSES & GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **High temperature and humidity:** Reduce them to the extent possible;
- **Fluid loss (through perspiration) & low fluid consumption:** Supply plentiful amounts of water, Gatorade, etc.; Hydrate before high heat levels are experienced;
- **Direct sun exposure (with no shade) or extreme heat:** Provide more breaks, out of the sun;
- **Limited air movement (no breeze or wind):** Provide ventilation/air conditioning whenever possible;
- **Physical exertion:** Limit in extreme hot weather;
- **Use of bulky protective clothing and equipment:** Reduce their bulk (while remaining protective) & weight;
- **Poor physical condition or ongoing health problems:** Assign job tasks accordingly, provided there exists actual or constructive knowledge;
- **Some medications:** Workers must take the time to understand the limitations imposed by drugs that are legally prescribed for their use;
- **Pregnancy:** Workers and Employers must work together in understanding and accommodating limitations associated with pregnancy and high heat conditions;
- **Lack of previous exposure to hot workplaces:** Being acclimated (incrementally exposed) to higher heat conditions allows the body to adjust;
- **Previous heat-related illness:** Introduces an individualized susceptibility that must be related to the employer, recognized and taken into account.

Got an OSH-related question? Write to the JSC at: blueoceana@optonline.net

Working Together For The Benefit Of All

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