Heat Illness Prevention Elements

Heat illness results when the body’s internal temperature system is overworked. These procedures are designed to assist the district in reducing the risk of heat related illnesses and to ensure that emergency assistance is provided without delay.

The elements reflected within this Heat Illness Prevention Plan are those contained in Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3395 (T8 CCR 3395) and consist of the following:

* Procedures or the provision of water and access to shade;
* High heat procedures;
* Emergency response procedures;
* Acclimatization methods and procedures;
* Training.

Provision of Water (c)
Water is a key preventive measure to minimize the risk of heat related illnesses.

According to regulation 3395 (c), employees shall have access to potable drinking water (meeting the requirements of Sections 1524, 3363, and 3457, as applicable), including but not limited to the requirements that it be fresh, pure, suitably cold and provided to employees free of charge. The water shall be located as close as practicable to the areas where employees are working. Where the supply of water is not plumbed or otherwise continuously supplied, water shall be provided in sufficient quantity at the beginning of the work shift to provide one quart per employee per hour for drinking for the entire shift. Smaller quantities of water are allowed if effective procedures for replenishment during the shift are established to allow employees to drink one quart or more per hour. The frequent drinking of water shall be encouraged.

*To ensure access to sufficient quantities of potable drinking water and to encourage the frequent drinking of potable water, the following steps will be taken:*

Supervisor will provide repeated reminders to employees to drink frequently and more water breaks will be provided.

- Working water fountains will be available and within close proximity at most job sites.
- Where water fountains are not easily accessible, the district will provide water bottles.

**Access to Shade (d)**

Access to rest and shade or other cooling measures are important preventive steps to minimize the risk of heat related illnesses.

Shade shall be present when the outside temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit in the work area.
Employees suffering from heat illness or believing a preventative recovery period is needed shall 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. Such access to shade shall be permitted at all times.

An individual employee who takes a preventative cool-down rest shall be monitored and asked if he or she is experiencing symptoms of heat illness; shall be encouraged to remain in the shade; and shall not be ordered back to work until any signs or symptoms of heat illness have abated. If the employee exhibits signs or reports symptoms of heat illness while taking a preventative cool-down rest, the employer shall provide appropriate first aid or emergency response.

To ensure access to shade and a preventative recovery period at all times, the following steps will be taken:

- During days of anticipated heat, jobs requiring outside exposure will be conducted early in the day. When a modified or shorter work-shift is not possible, more water and rest breaks will be provided.
- Indoor jobs where air conditioning is available will be conducted in the late morning or afternoon when the temperatures are higher.
- Employees will be reminded regularly to take rest breaks in shaded and cooler areas.
- Supervisor will provide umbrellas, canopies or other portable devices for shade within 50-100 yards of the work activity if other shade is not available.
- Drinking water will be available in shaded areas.

**High-Heat Procedures (e)**

Because of extreme environmental conditions during a heat wave, employees’ physical and mental condition can change rapidly into a serious medical condition. The onset of heat illness may be confused with other problems and may not always be obvious before it becomes life-threatening. Therefore, extra measures may be required to prevent and/or respond to heat illness.
The employer shall implement high-heat procedures when the temperature equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Stay alert to weather – make sure to monitor the weather and the specific locations where work activities are occurring. Continue to stay updated throughout the work shift on the changing air temperatures and other environmental factors. Use current weather information to make the appropriate adjustments in work activities throughout the workday.
- Pre-shift meetings will be conducted to review high-heat procedures. Topics may include staying hydrated, taking cool-down rests, identifying the employees who will call for emergency medical services when needed, and discussing how employees will be observed.
- Supervisors or designee will monitor employees for signs and symptoms of heat illness.
- Co-workers will use a “buddy system” to watch each other closely for discomfort or symptoms of heat illness.
- Extra vigilance – real time communication and the “buddy system” account for the whereabouts of employees at more frequent intervals throughout the work shift and at the end of the work shift.
- Employees are authorized to call for emergency services if needed.
- Employees, who are required to work alone, will be in regular communication using radio or cell phone in locations where there is adequate coverage.
- Workers who were previously fully acclimatized are at risk for heat illness during a heat wave because during a heat wave, the body does not have enough time to adjust to a sudden, abnormally high temperature or other extreme conditions.
- Additional water consumption – encourage employees to drink small quantities of water more frequently and have effective replenishment measures in place for the provision of extra drinking water to ensure that supplies are reliable.
• Additional cooling measures – employees may use alternative cooling measures in addition to shade (i.e. air conditioned rooms, spraying themselves with water)
• Additional and/or longer rest breaks – employees may be allowed to take more frequent and longer breaks.
• Changing work scheduling and assignments – supervisors may need to put into place one or more of the following additional measures:
  o Start the work shift even earlier in the day or later in the evening.
  o Cut work shifts short or stop work altogether.
  o Reduce the severity of work by scheduling slower paced, less physically demanding work during the hot parts of the day and the heaviest work activities during the cooler parts of the day.

**Emergency Response (f)**

Emergency medical services will be provided as quickly as possible if an employee suffers heat illness.

If a supervisor observes, or any employee reports, any signs or symptoms of heat illness in any employee, the supervisor shall take immediate action commensurate with the severity of the illness. If the signs or symptoms are indicators of severe heat illness (such as, but not limited to, decreased level of consciousness, staggering, vomiting, disorientation, irrational behavior or convulsions), the employer must implement emergency response procedures.

An employee with signs or symptoms of heat illness will not be left alone or sent home without being offered first aid or provided with medical services.

If employees cannot reach emergency medical services directly (i.e. cell phone coverage is inadequate), the employer shall designate a person who can immediately contact emergency services on behalf of the employees. Employees must be able to contact this person quickly (i.e. by radio) to request emergency services be summoned.
To ensure that emergency medical services are provided without delay, the following steps will be taken:

- Supervisors and co-workers are encouraged never to discount any signs or symptoms they are observing or experiencing and will immediately report them.
- Supervisors will carry cell phones, radios or other means of communication, to ensure that emergency services can be called and check that these are functional at the worksite prior to each shift.
- In the event of an emergency, supervisor or lead will call 911 and give clear and precise directions to the work site.
- Employees may contact emergency services directly and are not required to contact a supervisor first.
- An employee who may be experiencing heat illness symptoms will be kept cool and comfortable once emergency service responders have been called.

Acclimatization (g)

Acclimatization is a process by which the body adjusts to increased heat exposure. The body needs time to adapt when working in hotter environments.

Employees shall be closely observed by a supervisor or designee during a heat wave, where a “heat wave” is any day in which the predicted high temperature for the day will be at least 80 degrees Fahrenheit and at least ten degrees Fahrenheit higher than the average high daily temperature the preceding five days.

An employee who has been newly assigned to a high heat area shall be closely observed by a supervisor or designee for the first 14 days of the employee’s employment.

To ensure that employees can acclimatize to the conditions, the following steps will be taken:

- Employees are encouraged to take it easy when a heat wave strikes or when starting a job that newly exposes them to heat.
- Supervisors or designees will closely observe employees during a heat wave, as defined above.
• Supervisors will strive to find alternative tasks that lessen the intensity of employee’s work during the heat wave and during the 2-week break-in period of new employees.

Training (h)

Training is critical to help reduce the risk of heat related illnesses and to assist with obtaining emergency assistance without delay. Training will be conducted before work begins that should reasonably be anticipated to result in exposure to the risk of heat illness.

*Training in the following topics shall be provided to all supervisory and non-supervisory employees* (e) (1):

(A) The environmental and personal risk factors for heat illness;

(B) The employer’s procedures for complying with the requirements of this standard including, but not limited to, the employer’s responsibility to provide water, shade, cool-down rests, and access to first aid as well as the employees’ right to exercise their rights under this standard without retaliation;

(C) The importance of frequent consumption of small quantities of water when the work environment is hot and employees are likely to be sweating more than usual in the performance of their duties;

(D) The concept, importance, and methods of acclimatization pursuant to the employer’s procedures under subsection (i)(4).

(E) The different types of heat illness, the common signs and symptoms of heat illness, and appropriate first aid and/or emergency responses to the different types of heat illness, and in addition, that heat illness may progress quickly from mild symptoms and signs to serious and life-threatening illness;

(F) The importance to employees of immediately reporting to the employer, directly or through the employee’s supervisor, symptoms or signs of heat illness in themselves, or in co-workers;
(G) The employer’s procedures for responding to symptoms of possible heat illness, including how emergency medical services will be provided should they become necessary;

(H) The employer’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;

(I) The employer’s procedures for ensuring that, in the event of emergency, clear and precise directions to the work site can and will be provided as needed to emergency responders.

*Note: T8 CCR 3203(a)(3) requires that communication for employees shall be in a form readily understandable by all affected employees.*

**(e) (2) Supervisor training:** Prior to assignment to supervision of employees working in the heat, training on the following topics shall be provided:

(A) The information required to be provided by section (e) (1) above.

(B) The procedures the supervisor is to follow to implement the applicable provisions in this section.

(C) The procedures the supervisor is to follow when an employee exhibits symptom consistent with possible heat illness, including emergency response procedures.

*To ensure appropriate training, the following steps will be taken:*

Employee training will be conducted as the weather begins to warm and on a weekly/daily basis during the hottest days and heat waves.

- Records of the training will be kept with the Injury and Illness Prevention Program documentation.

**To report any concerns regarding our district’s heat illness plan contact:** Pat Atkins, Superintendent