Heat Illness

Because San Francisco has a very temperate climate heat illness is rare in the city; however, there are a few days during the year when the outdoor temperature exceeds 85 degrees Fahrenheit when you should take the following precautions to lower the potential of health effects from heat illness:

- Know signs/symptoms of heat illness
- Block out direct sun and avoid working long periods around heat sources.
- Drink fluids often and BEFORE you are thirsty.
- Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose fitting clothes.
- Be aware that poor physical condition, some health problems, such as high blood pressure or diabetes, pregnancy, colds, and flu, and some medications can increase your personal risk. If you are under medical treatment, ask your healthcare provider.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Low liquid intake; history of heat illness
- Heavy or constant physical labor
- Clothing that provides little to no air penetration
- Not being accustomed to a hot workplace environment

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

To prevent Heat Illness

- Training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them is available through the OEH&S (476-1300).
- Schedule frequent rest periods with water breaks in cooler or air conditioned areas.

What to Do When a Worker is Ill from Heat exposure?

- Call a supervisor for help. If your supervisor is not available dial 9-911.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Move worker to a cooler/shaded area.
- Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink.

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