

Know how to work safely when the heat is on?

The devil's in the details when your goal is avoiding heat stress. It's estimated that more than 10 million workers in the United States are affected by it every year. But by paying attention to a few essential prevention techniques, your crew can keep their cool and get the job done in hot weather.

Are you sure you're drinking enough water?

Make sure that drinking water or [electrolyte replacement fluids](#) are plentiful and easy to find on your project. The harder your crewmembers work, the more water they need during the day, especially when it's a scorcher. A good rule of thumb is one quart per hour for every worker during their entire shift.

What simple products can help you keep your cool?

One of the best ways to chill out on the job is to use products that can be soaked in water and then placed against the skin in non-restrictive ways. [Bandanas](#), headbands, [triangle hats](#) and hard hat inserts are a few of the evaporative cooling aids that help us adjust to rising temperatures on the job.

How much shade is enough for your project?

When the sun is really bearing down, shady areas on the jobsite are vital. If natural shade isn't available, [canopies](#) or tarps can provide the relief your workers need. You should have enough shade to accommodate at least 25 percent of your crew at any time during their shift. And they should be able to sit in a normal posture without having to be in physical contact with others.

How do fans make workers cooler when it's so hot?

While it's true that fans don't actually make the air any cooler, they do promote quicker evaporation of moisture by getting the air moving. That means you'll benefit from the cooling effects of any evaporative aids you use - or just from the plain old sweat beading up on your brow.

How do frequent breaks help in the heat?

Our bodies need occasional breaks to recover from the stress that extreme heat puts on our system. Failure to provide breaks for your crew isn't just against the law - it could lead to heat exhaustion or even death. Besides, your team will do better work if they get the chance to catch their breath from time to time.

Is a healthy diet important when working in the heat?

Of course, eating heavy, filling meals can weigh you down and make you feel sluggish - but it's important to not miss meals because a good diet gives us the energy to fight off heat exhaustion.

If heat illness strikes one of your workers, take action without delay! Provide first aid and emergency services at the first signs of heat stress.

digging deeper

For more information on heat stress check out these links:

Preventing Heat Stress

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/prevention.html>

Protective Measures

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/protective_high.html

Using the Heat Index: A Guide For Employers

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/index.html

Heat Protection - Printable Quick Card

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3154.pdf>

Of course, prevention is ALWAYS better than having to implement a cure. But if you do find yourself in need of treatment advice the following page outlines various symptoms and appropriate first aid measures.

Treating Heat Exhaustion

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/heat_illnesses.html

Heat Waves and Related Illnesses

<https://businessconnectworld.com/2019/07/09/heat-waves-and-heat-related-illnesses/>