



Occupational Health Unit

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Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program

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KEEPING CONNECTICUT'S WORKERS HEALTHY

HEAT SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

On average, heat is the number one weather-related killer in the United States, and many of those harmed or killed are workers. There are several things employers can do to protect their employees working in hot environments.



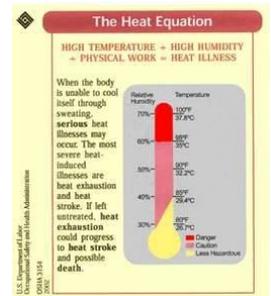
Workers in hot environments should be encouraged to take frequent breaks away from direct sunlight. Employers should also schedule physically-demanding work during the cooler parts of the day and provide cooling fans and moisture-wicking clothing to help their employees keep cool. Workers should also be encouraged to drink non-caffeinated liquids frequently to stay properly hydrated, typically 8 ounces of fluids every 20-30 minutes. In addition, having workers onsite trained in recognizing and treating heat stress disorders, including heat exhaustion and heat stroke, is essential to early recognition and intervention.

FAST FACTS

The following data represents work-related heat stress injuries reported to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as well as to Connecticut emergency departments.

In the United States:

- Heat is the number one weather-related killer in the United States, resulting in nearly 700 fatalities each year
- In July 2011, 78 all-time record-high maximum temperatures and 209 all-time record-high minimum temperatures were recorded.



In Connecticut:

- Over the last 10 years, approximately 30 workers were treated in Connecticut emergency departments each year for heat-related illnesses .
- 88% of workers treated in emergency departments for heat-related illness were male.
- Minority workers were at higher risk of heat-related illness requiring emergency department care, based on their relative representation in the workforce.

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/>

http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/heat_stress.pdf

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/index.html>

http://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_iii/otm_iii_4.html

