Toolbox Talks

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Heat Exposure and Heat Related Hazards

Introduction:

Throughout the day weather conditions can change quickly. These changes can have a drastic effect on one's health, and this effect depends on how well the body adjusts to these changes. This sudden change can often trigger an illness. Each person adapts to the changes differently, and for some, it may be more dangerous and potentially life threatening. Changes in barometric pressure or weather pressure systems, can cause a change in one's blood pressure which can lead to other conditions including arthritis, headaches, and heart attacks.

Discussion Points:

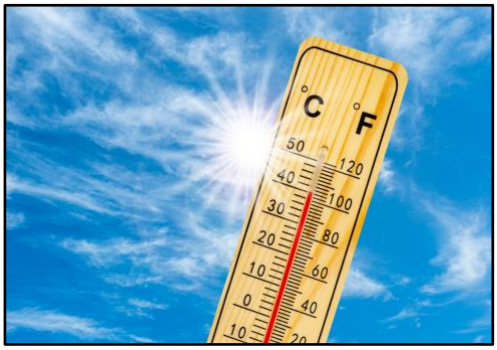
- Changes in weather conditions
- Heat related hazards
- Employee training
- Supervisor's role in monitoring work conditions, and health conditions of workers
- OSHA resources on heat exposure, including guidelines and recommendations for businesses to use when setting up the Health Illness Prevention Plan

Discussion:

All workers must receive training for hazards associated with heat, which includes recognition of the following; environmental conditions, level of physical activity, use of PPE, and individual health-risk factors. It is important that each employee be aware of the risk factors that can lead to illness and how to make the necessary adjustments.

Management should assign a supervisor to monitor work conditions and monitor each worker throughout the day, and they should make note of any conditions that may develop, watching for signs and symptoms related to illness of workers. The supervisor must be trained to identify heat hazards, recognize signs and symptoms of heat related illness, administer first aid, and activate the emergency medical services when necessary.

As always, be safe out there!



August 26, 2019

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