

SafetySpotlight

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MNLA

BEATING THE HEAT

Precautions for working outdoors

The combination of heat and humidity can be a serious health threat when working outdoors. In addition to the temperature, you are more susceptible to heat stroke, heat exhaustion and sun poisoning when you are exposed to excessive amounts of sun. To beat the heat:

- Drink plenty of water before you get thirsty, but avoid beverages containing caffeine or alcohol.
- Wear light, loose-fitting, breathable clothing, such as items made of cotton.
- Eat smaller meals before work activity.
- Ask your doctor if the heat will aggravate your body because of any medications you are taking, and take the proper precautions.
- Be aware that equipment such as respirators or work suits can increase heat stress.
- Wear sunblock of at least 15 SPF, which blocks out 92 percent of harmful UV rays.
- Take breaks, as needed, in shaded or air-conditioned areas.

DO YOU KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION?

You can lose up to 10 cups of water a day by sweating, breathing and eliminating waste. This is potentially harmful to your body since water and electrolytes are essential for proper body functions. To combat heat-related illnesses, re-hydrate immediately when you experience one or more of these symptoms:

- Excessive thirst
- Sleepiness or fatigue
- Dry mouth
- Muscle weakness
- Headache
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Inability to sweat

If you become dehydrated and are unable to drink fluids, give these a try:

- Suck on ice chips
- Suck on a popsicle
- Sip through a straw



Did You Know?

Overhydration is just as serious a problem as dehydration. Overhydration happens when a person drinks too much, and can result in dizziness and even seizures. When working in the heat, experts advise limiting your liquid intake to no more than one and a half quarts per hour and 12 quarts in a 24-hour period.

Compliments of Gallagher

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