

SAFETY

Company Name

Meeting Date

Employees Present:

SUBJECT OF THE MONTH: **Heat Emergencies**

Anyone can become susceptible to heat emergencies in very warm weather. This is especially true for people doing hard work or heavy labor outside. However, if the temperature is high enough, even indoor workers can become susceptible and may suffer heat stroke, heat exhaustion, or heat cramps.

CHECKLIST ITEMS

- _____ Electrical Cords Checked & GFCI's to protect employees
- _____ Required Jobsite Postings:
 (Emergency Phone #'s and "Safety & Health Protection on the Job" Poster)
- _____ Emergency Medical Plan
- _____ Fire Protection/Prevention
- _____ Hazard Communication Program
- _____ Tool Guards
- _____ First Aid Kit
- _____ Fall Protection

JOBSITE REVIEW: Inspection Notes/Concerns/Action Plan

Company Safety Officer: _____

NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Oregon Home Builders Association's Safety Committee's purpose is to provide safety guidelines, information and resources to help our members work more safely and reduce jobsite accidents. Full and active monthly participation in safety meetings using the OHBA Safety Committee's agendas, topics and checklists will only meet safety committee requirements. It remains your responsibility to comply with all aspects of safety rules and regulations.



Safety Committee

HEAT EMERGENCIES!

by Doug Plemons, Loss Control Manager
BW Insurance, Inc.

Anyone can become susceptible to heat emergencies in very warm weather. This is especially true for people doing hard work or heavy labor outside. However, if the temperature is high enough, even indoor workers can become susceptible and may suffer heat stroke, heat exhaustion, or heat cramps.

HEAT STROKE (or sun stroke) is a life-threatening situation and must be treated immediately. The victim's temperature-control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly.

Signs and symptoms of heat stroke are hot, red, dry skin; very small pupils and very high body temperature. The body temperature may be rising rapidly. There may also be a rapid pulse, very small pupils, loss of consciousness, and convulsions. If the victim was sweating from heavy work, their skin may be wet; otherwise it will feel dry.

First-Aid. Call 911. Get the person out of the heat and into a cooler place fast. Quickly cool the victim's body. Immerse the victim in a cool bath or wrap wet towels around their body and fan them. Elevate head and shoulders and treat for shock. Give nothing by mouth.

HEAT EXHAUSTION is less dangerous than heat stroke but it can cause collapse. It typically occurs when working in a warm, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Fluid loss causes blood flow to decrease in the vital organs, resulting in a form of shock. With heat exhaustion sweat does not evaporate, as it should. As a result, the body is not cooled effectively.

Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion are cool, pale, and moist (clammy) skin, heavy sweating, dilated pupils, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, low blood pressure, weak pulse, dilated pupils, and vomiting. Body temperature will be nearly normal.

First-Aid. Get the victim out of the heat and into a cooler place immediately. Place them on their back with feet up. If possible, remove or loosen the victim's clothing. Cool them by fanning and applying cold packs (putting a cloth between the cold pack and the victim's skin) or wet towels. Give care for shock and give them one-half glassful of water to drink every 15 minutes, if they are conscious and can tolerate it.

HEAT CRAMPS (muscle spasms) are muscle pains and spasms due to heavy exertion, heavy sweating, and usually involve the abdominal muscles or legs. Cramps occur in arms and legs after strenuous work.

First-Aid. Get the victim to a cooler place. If they can tolerate fluids, give them one-half glass of water or sports drinks every 15 minutes for an hour. No alcohol or caffeine.

HEAT RASH (prickly heat) occurs when humidity prevents sweat from evaporating. Over the counter drugs are available for treatment.

SUNBURN obviously occurs when skin is over exposed to the sun's harmful rays. The summer is most dangerous because ultraviolet and infrared rays are intense and because the temperature is warm and comfortable making it easier to work without a shirt. Wear protective clothing and consider wearing sunscreen or sunblock.

AVOID HEAT EMERGENCIES

During the summer:

- wear protective, light weight, light colored clothing
- drink cool water, (not iced water), at least a cup every 20 minutes
- take breaks to cool off. A worker should never be denied a break if they are over heated.

DO NOT GIVE ASPIRIN OR SALT TO ANYONE SUFFERING FROM A HEAT RELATED EMERGENCY.

