

About this training guide

This guide will help you carry out training on heat illness prevention with your workers. The training is designed to be short, easy to follow and in compliance with the requirements laid out in the Cal/OSHA heat standard, General Industry Safety Order (GISO) 3395.

Use the guide with these two training tools:

- 1) **The poster set** – you can show this to the workers to have visuals while you train.
- 2) **The worker factsheet** – Distribute copies for each worker to follow along with the training.



The training guide will lead you through the training.

- **Instructions for the trainer are written in red.**
- The answers to questions are provided in shaded boxes. Wait for the crew to give answers based on what they know, and then add any missing points or clarify any information if needed.

TIP: If you allow time for questions and answers, or some discussion of the topic, **workers are more likely to remember** the information provided in the training.

1a. Health effects of heat

Say: Today we're going to talk about heat, a common hazard for workers like us who work outdoors.

Just like we can't let a car engine overheat or it shuts down, we don't want our bodies to get too hot. When we work outdoors, in hot, humid weather under the sun, we need to protect ourselves. By being physically active, our bodies generate heat inside us too.

Ask: What are some of the first signs you may notice if your body is getting too hot?

- Sweating
- Feeling tired, weak or dizzy
- Headache
- Heat rash – small red bumps on the skin, usually on the arms, legs, back or stomach

Say: These early signs tell us it's time to cool off, rest, and drink water to recover. Otherwise you could develop some of the more serious effects of heat.

Ask the crew to open their fact sheet to page 2, Two types of heat illness. Use the poster Health effects of heat to review all the symptoms and teach them about heat exhaustion and heat stroke.



Heat exhaustion



Heat stroke

1b. Health effects of heat (cont.)

Ask: What is the main difference you can notice between these two types of heat illness?

- With heat exhaustion you sweat a lot, but with heat stroke you stop sweating and your skin is red.
- Symptoms of heat stroke are more visible to others.

Ask: Heat illness can affect all of us, but some people are at greater risk. What do you think would put a person at greater risk?

- You aren't used to working in the heat.
- You are new to working outdoors.
- You had some early heat-related symptoms the day before.
- You are not physically fit or are overweight.
- You drink alcohol or take drugs (illegal drugs or prescription medication).
- You wear dark, heavy or tight clothing, or use personal protective equipment.

Add the following points. Say:

- People react differently. You may get some of the symptoms or most of them.
- Some health conditions put you at greater risk. These include diabetes, kidney and heart problems, pregnancy and being overweight. If you have these, it would be good to talk to your doctor about the work you do and ask if there are any specific precautions you need to take.
- Tell your supervisor right away if you have any symptoms – it can quickly become life-threatening. Since earlier symptoms (headache, nausea, etc.) are not clearly visible to others, it's important that you report them right away.

2. Stay safe and healthy!

Say: While heat illness is very dangerous, it is also preventable. Let's talk about how we can protect ourselves from heat.

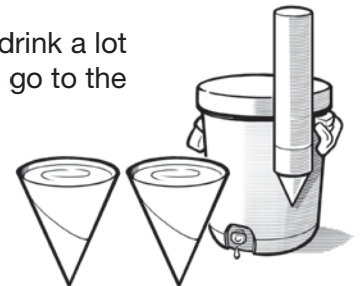
Turn to the poster Stay safe and healthy and ask the crew to look at page 3 of their fact sheet (same title).

Ask: Based on what you see on the poster and fact sheet, what are important steps to prevent heat illness?

- Drink plenty of water, even if you aren't thirsty.
- Rest in the shade to cool down.
- Watch out for each other.
- Wear hats and light-colored clothing.
- Avoid drinks like sodas, coffee, energy drinks or alcoholic drinks. They dehydrate you and make it more dangerous to work in the heat.

Add the following points. Say:

- Not being used to the heat is a big problem. If you haven't worked in the heat for a week or more, your body needs time to adjust. We want you to take more breaks or do less strenuous work during your first weeks on the job.
- It is better to drink small amounts of water often – like a couple of cones every 15 minutes. We will supply enough water for each of you to drink about 8 cones (equal to 4 cups or one liter) every hour.
- People worry that if they drink a lot of water, they will have to go to the bathroom more often. In fact, they will mostly sweat it off.



3. Be prepared for an emergency

Say: While we hope to prevent heat illness, it is important for all of us to know what to do in case one of us does get symptoms and needs help.

Turn to the poster *Be prepared for an emergency* and ask the crew to look at page 4 of their fact sheet for the drawing “Emergency Plan.”

Ask: What steps do we need to take if someone in our crew has symptoms?

Use the information on the poster to add any steps workers don’t mention.

Add the following points. Say:

- Everyone in our crew needs to know who and how to call for medical help. Each day, we will tell you who to call right away if anyone has symptoms. This person will have a phone/radio. We’ll also tell you who is trained in first aid.
- Each day we will also show you where we are located, so that you can give clear directions to our work site if you need to call 911 or another emergency number.
- When you call for help, also be ready to describe the symptoms.



TIP: It is a **very good idea for the crew to practice** what they would do if someone has symptoms. This way if an emergency does occur, they are more likely to remember the steps.

4a. Heat illness can be prevented!

Say: Let’s review what we have learned. I’m going to read one story and we’ll talk about it.

Read out loud: Rogelio’s story

Rogelio is a new member of the crew. On his second day, he works hard for long periods without a break. In the early afternoon his co-worker, Julio, looks over and sees that Rogelio is sweating profusely and is acting strangely. Julio asks Rogelio what’s going on, and Rogelio says he has a slight headache and feels dizzy. Julio calls the crew leader. They give him water and help him sit down. Julio stays with him while the crew leader calls 911 for medical help. Rogelio recovers, but can’t work for a few days. Later, he says he had wanted to show he could work hard, and he didn’t drink much water because he didn’t feel thirsty.

Ask: Does Rogelio have heat illness? Why?

- Yes – he is sweating, tired, has a headache and feels dizzy. These are the early signs.

Ask: Why do you think Rogelio got sick?

- Rogelio wasn’t used to working in the heat. He should have had less intense work until he got used to it.
- They had not made sure Rogelio got enough breaks.
- Rogelio hadn’t drunk water. You need to drink even if you aren’t thirsty.
- Rogelio wanted to prove he could work hard – he didn’t report symptoms as soon as he felt them.

4b. Heat illness can be prevented! (cont.)

Ask: What did they do right to help Rogelio?

- Julio knew the symptoms of heat illness and called the crew leader.
- They called 911, gave him water, and helped him sit down to rest.

Ask: What else could they have done?

- Taken him to shade once he had symptoms, and tried to cool him.
- Made sure he had time to get used to working in the heat.
- Reminded him to drink water and rest in the shade.

FINAL POINTS

Turn to the poster *Heat illness can be prevented* to summarize the key points. Be sure to include your company’s procedures. For example, **say:** At our worksite:

We are providing water (describe where): _____

We are providing shade (describe where): _____

If anyone has symptoms, let _____ know right away (fill in name of person in charge in case of emergency).

We protect workers by (give examples: how is the work schedule modified? How do you watch for symptoms in workers? What do you do in a heat wave?): _____

The best strategy is always prevention. We need you to drink water, rest in the shade when you need to, and watch out for each other. Let us know right away if there is a problem!



WATER. REST. SHADE.

The work can’t get done without them.



TRAINING GUIDE