



# Focus Sheet | Heat Stress

*for Supervisors*

## Supervisors take action.

### Do you supervise employees who work out-of-doors?

If you have employees that work outside from May 1st through September 30th, then you need to protect them from the heat. Even in Seattle's famously mild climate, you have to take precautions. Some of the requirements kick in at relatively mild temperatures if workers have to wear multiple clothing layers. The paper work and training requirements have to be done for anyone who works outside anytime between May 1 through September 30.

### Here's what you have to do.

Make sure your health and safety plan addresses working in hot environments. The plan must describe your program to reduce the risk of heat related illnesses, including a description of the training, who gets trained and what you are going to do when it gets hot.

If you use Hazard Review Checklists check heat stress on the form as a potential hazard.

Each employee who works outside must be trained about the hazards of heat exposure. EH&S has example training modules supervisors can use to cover all required points. The training you provide must include:

- The health effects of excessive heat exposure, including heat cramps, heat rash, heat exhaustion, fainting, and heat stroke.
- Environmental factors that increase the risk of heat related illness, including air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat from the sun or other sources, conductive heat sources such as the ground, air movement, workload and duration, and personal protective equipment.
- Personal factors that may increase susceptibility to heat-related illness including, but not limited to, an individual's age, degree of acclimatization, medical conditions, drinking water consumption, alcohol use, caffeine use, nicotine use, and use of medications that affect the body's responses to heat.
- Supervisors must know all of the above and what to do if an employee starts to exhibit signs of heat related illness or complains of the symptoms and how to get them emergency medical help.

Encourage employees to watch each other for signs of heat stress.



**Drink lots of water**

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## You also have to protect employees when it does get hot.

- Provide Water
- Give rest breaks in the shade/out of the sun.

When it actually gets hot you must make sure any engineering controls such as misting fans and procedures, such as additional rest periods that are listed in your Health and Safety Plan are implemented. Make sure employees have plenty of water and encourage them to drink it. Monitor employees for signs and symptoms of heat related illnesses. You must take these precautions at 52° F if your employees are wearing vapor barrier clothing, such as rain suits, at 77° F if they are wearing double layers of clothing, such as coveralls over their regular clothes or at 89° F for everyone else.



**Remember: *Supply Water and Provide Cool Rest Breaks***

### Need more help?

Just give EH&S a call at (206) 543-7388 or for help training check out:  
[www.ehs.washington.edu/ohs/heat.ppt](http://www.ehs.washington.edu/ohs/heat.ppt)

**Environmental Health & Safety**  
201 Hall Health Center Box 354400  
Seattle, Washington 98195-4400  
206.543.0465 FAX 206.543.3351  
[www.ehs.washington.edu](http://www.ehs.washington.edu)

