

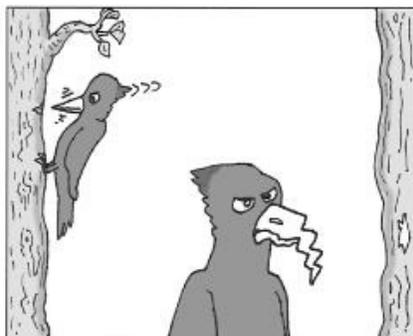
## Improved heat safety app

Originally issued by OSHA and redesigned by OSHA in cooperation with NIOSH, the *OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool* mobile app is available for iOS and Android devices just in time for the summer heat. The app determines heat-index values, a measure for how hot it feels based on temperature and humidity.

Workers exposed to hot and humid conditions, including construction workers, landscapers, and farmers, are encouraged to use the app to check conditions if they plan to be outdoors. In addition to calculating the heat index, the app provides users with specific recommendations about staying cool, staying hydrated, and scheduling rest breaks.

The app includes:

- A visual indicator of the current heat index and associated risk levels specific to your current geographical location
- Precautionary recommendations specific to heat index-associated risk levels
- An interactive, hourly forecast of heat-index values, risk level, and recommendations for planning outdoor work activities in advance
- Editable location, temperature, and humidity controls for calculation of variable conditions
- Signs and symptoms and first-aid information for heat-related illnesses



Classic repetitive motion injury.

July 2017

## It's summer, and the heat is here

### *Protect yourself against heat illness*

It's that time of year again when heat illness is a particularly important safety concern. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), workers may experience longer or more intense heat exposures and are more likely to engage in strenuous physical activity in the heat than the general public.

### **What's the big deal about heat?**

Heat illness occurs when your body can't adequately cool itself through sweating. According to the National Safety Council (NSC), heat-related illnesses can escalate rapidly, leading to delirium, organ damage, and even death.

### **What are the dangers?**

If you work in hot conditions, you can be at risk of several heat-related illnesses. The following are heat-related illnesses and what to look for:

- **Heat rash** consists of red, irritated bumps and is a sign that hot conditions are affecting your body.
- **Heat syncope (fainting)** can occur when a person is not used to working in a hot environment.
- **Heat cramps** is caused by a loss of salt when sweating. Severe cramps may require a visit to a medical professional.
- **Heat exhaustion** occurs if you have lost too much fluid, salt, or both through sweating.
- **Heatstroke** occurs when the body's natural cooling processes stop working, and the ill person stops sweating. Symptoms of heatstroke include hot and dry skin, confusion, convulsions, seizures, and loss of consciousness. Heatstroke is very serious and can lead to death.

### **What can you do to keep cool?**

All of these heat-related illnesses can be easily prevented by taking the following steps while working in hot conditions:

- Drink plenty of water throughout the day. In hot conditions, you should aim for about 1 cup every 15 to 20 minutes.
- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing.
- Drink sports drinks to help replace the salt you lose when you sweat.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol, which can both cause dehydration.
- Take frequent breaks in a cool, shady place.
- If the temperature spikes suddenly or you are new to working in hot conditions, take more frequent breaks, and gradually build up your workload.
- If you notice yourself experiencing symptoms of heat illness, tell your supervisor, and take a break in a cool, shaded area.

**HIGH TEMPERATURE + HIGH HUMIDITY + PHYSICAL WORK = HEAT ILLNESS** The U.S. Labor Department reminds you of the above formula during these dog days of August. Serious heat illness occurs when the body is unable to cool itself through sweating. Untreated, heat exhaustion could progress to heatstroke and death. **What Are the Symptoms?**

- Headaches
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Weakness
- Mood changes such as irritability, confusion, or the inability to think straight
- Upset stomach or vomiting
- Decreased or dark-colored urine
- Fainting or passing out
- Pale, clammy skin

**What Should You Do?**

- **Act immediately.**
- **Move victim to a cool, shaded area.** Don't leave victim alone. If symptoms include dizziness or light-headedness, lay victim on the back and raise legs 6 to 8 inches. If symptoms include nausea, lay victim on the side.
- **Loosen and remove heavy clothing.**
- **Have victim drink cool water** every 15 minutes unless nauseated.
- **Cool victim** by fanning and spraying with a cool mist of water or applying a wet cloth to the skin.
- **Call 911** if the person does not feel better in a few minutes.

## Quiz: It's summer, and the heat is here

Choose the correct response to the following statements.

1. Heat-related illnesses are neither serious nor life-threatening conditions. **True or False**
2. You can drink coffee and alcohol if you are working in hot conditions because they have water in them. **True or False**
3. It's recommended that in hot conditions, you should drink about 1 cup of \_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ minutes.
  - A. Sport (electrolyte) drink; 10 to 15
  - B. Water; 15 to 20
  - C. Water; 30 to 40
4. Heat cramps are caused by a loss of salt when sweating. **True or False**
5. Heatstroke occurs when the body's natural cooling processes stop working and you stop sweating. **True or False**

### ANSWERS

1. **False.** Heat-related illnesses can lead to some very serious and dangerous health problems, including organ damage and even death. 2. **False.** It's dangerous to drink alcohol or caffeinated drinks in hot conditions because they are diuretics and can cause dehydration. 3. **B.** If you are working in hot conditions, you should be drinking 1 cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes. 4. **True.** Heat cramps are caused by a lack of salt in your body when working in the heat. See a doctor or medical professional if you are having severe cramps. 5. **True.** If you are suffering from heatstroke, seek help immediately! Heatstroke is very serious and can lead to death.

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## Make July a Safe Month

***Be careful when grilling and setting off fireworks***

### Barbecue Safety

- Make sure the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line is not blocked.
- Don't overfill the propane tank.
- Don't wear loose clothing while cooking.
- Never add lighter fluid to an already lit fire—the flame can flashback into the container and explode.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Supervise children around outdoor grills.
- Dispose of hot coals properly—douse them with plenty of water and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper, or wooden containers.
- Never grill/barbecue in enclosed areas—carbon monoxide could be produced.

### Fireworks Safety

- Never light fireworks indoors or near dry grass.
- Always have a bucket of water and/or a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Don't wear loose clothing.
- Stand several feet away from lit fireworks. If a device does not go off, don't stand over it to investigate. Douse it with water and dispose of it.
- Always read the directions and warning labels on fireworks. If a device is not marked with the contents, directions, and a warning label, don't light it.
- Supervise children around fireworks at all times.



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