

# SAFETY MONDAY

## Hot Weather Safety Checklist

The Bureau of Labor Statistics released data showing that, in 2015, 37 work-related deaths and 2,830 nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses were reported stemming from exposure to environmental heat. Nearly 90 percent of the deaths occurred during the period of time between June and September of that year.

According to OSHA, when the air temperature is close to or warmer than normal body temperature, cooling of the body becomes more difficult. Blood circulated to the skin cannot lose its heat. Sweating then becomes the main way the body cools off. But, sweating is effective only if the humidity level is low enough to allow evaporation, and if you quickly replace the fluids and salts you lose when you sweat.

If you're not careful, your body will end up storing excessive heat which impacts your core temperature and can lead not only to losing concentration but also to having difficulty focusing on a task. Even worse, not taking care of your body in the heat can make you faint or can even kill you if your body isn't sufficiently cooled down.

Follow this checklist to help protect you during hot weather:

### Water

- ⇒ Have access to and drink plenty of fresh, cool drinking water
- ⇒ Ensure water coolers are refilled throughout the day

### Shade

- ⇒ Identify areas that are shaded or where you can cool down with air conditioning during breaks

### Training

- ⇒ Know the common signs and symptoms of heat-related illness
- ⇒ Take proper precautions to prevent heat-related illness
- ⇒ Be familiar with heat index and how it plays into your safety in hot weather
- ⇒ Know what steps to take if someone is having symptoms of heat-related illness

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