Sample Heat Safety Policy

Heat stress is known to cause mild to severe illness and in extreme cases, could cause death. As such, exposure to heat from the sun is a serious health and safety issue for <COMPANY NAME>.

Provision of Water

Employees will have access to drinking water. The water will be as close as possible to where employees work. Employees will be encouraged to drink water frequently throughout their workday.

Access to Shade

Employees will be allowed and encouraged to take a preventative cool-down rest in the shade when they feel the need to do so to protect themselves from overheating. Such access to shade will be permitted.

An individual employee who takes a preventative cool-down rest will (A) be monitored and asked if they are experiencing symptoms of heat illness; (B) be encouraged to remain in the shade; and (C) not be ordered back to work until any signs or symptoms of heat illness have abated.

High-heat Procedures

The following procedures will be established for high heat times:

Effective communication by voice, observation, or electronic means will be maintained so that employees at the worksite can contact a supervisor when necessary.

Employees will be monitored by one or more of the following:

Supervisor or designee observation

Mandatory buddy system,

Regular communication with sole employee such as by radio or cellular phone, or

Other effective means of observation.

One or more employees on each worksite will be authorized to call for emergency medical services.

Employees will be reminded throughout the work shift to drink plenty of water.

During pre-shift meetings, high heat procedures will be reviewed.

Emergency Response Procedures

In the case of a high heat emergency, the following procedures will be established to respond to signs and symptoms of possible heat illness:

If a supervisor observes, or any employee reports, any signs or symptoms of heat illness in any employee, the supervisor will take immediate action commensurate with the severity of the illness.

If the signs or symptoms are indicators of severe heat illness (such as, but not limited to, decreased level of consciousness, staggering, vomiting, disorientation, irrational behavior or convulsions), emergency response procedures will be implemented.

An employee exhibiting signs or symptoms of heat illness will be monitored and will not be left alone or sent home without being offered onsite first aid and/or being provided with emergency medical services.

A supervisor or designee will contact emergency medical services.

Acclimatization

An employee newly assigned to a high heat area will be closely observed by a supervisor or designee for up to 14 days of their employment.

Employee Training

Effective training in the following topics will be provided to each employee before the employee begins work in high heat:

The environmental and personal risk factors for heat illness, as well as the added burden of heat load on the body caused by exertion, clothing, and personal protective equipment.

The importance of frequent consumption of water when the work environment is hot and employees are likely to be sweating more than usual in the performance of their duties.

The concept, importance, and methods of acclimatization pursuant to the employer's procedures.

The different types of heat illness, the common signs and symptoms of different types of heat illness, and appropriate first aid and/or emergency responses to the different types of heat illness, and in addition, that heat illness may progress quickly from mild symptoms and signs to serious and life-threatening illness.

The importance to employees of immediately reporting to the employer, directly or through the employee's supervisor, symptoms or signs of heat illness in themselves or in co-workers.

<COMPANY NAME'S> procedures for responding to signs or symptoms of possible heat illness, including how emergency medical services will be provided should they become necessary.

Supervisor Training

Prior to supervising employees who may work in high heat, supervisors will be trained on:

The procedures the supervisor is to follow to implement the applicable provisions in this section.

The procedures the supervisor is to follow when an employee exhibits signs or reports symptoms consistent with possible heat illness, including emergency response procedures.

How to monitor weather reports and how to respond to hot weather advisories.

How to monitor weather reports and adjust work schedules to avoid high heat, as necessary.

Heat Illness Prevention Plan

<COMPANY'S NAME> will establish, implement, and maintain, an effective heat illness prevention plan. The plan will be in writing in both English and the language understood by the majority of the employees and will be made available at the worksite to employees.

Definitions

"Acclimatization" means temporary adaptation of the body to work in the heat that occurs gradually when a person is exposed to it. Acclimatization peaks in most people within four to fourteen days of regular work for at least two hours per day in the heat.

"Heat Illness" means a serious medical condition resulting from the body's inability to cope with a particular heat load and includes heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat syncope and heat stroke.

"Environmental risk factors for heat illness" means working conditions that create the possibility that heat illness could occur, including air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat from the sun and other sources, conductive heat sources such as the ground, air movement, workload severity and duration, protective clothing and personal protective equipment worn by employees.

"Personal risk factors for heat illness" means factors such as an individual's age, degree of acclimatization, health, water consumption, alcohol consumption, caffeine consumption, and use of prescription medications that affect the body's water retention or other physiological responses to heat.

"Shade" means blockage of direct sunlight. One indicator that blockage is sufficient is when objects do not cast a shadow in the area of blocked sunlight. Shade is not adequate when heat in the area of shade defeats the purpose of shade, which is to allow the body to cool. For example, a car sitting in the sun does not provide acceptable shade to a person inside it, unless the car is running with air conditioning. Shade may be provided by any natural or artificial means that does not expose employees to unsafe or unhealthy conditions and that does not deter or discourage access or use.

