

CFMEU SAFETY GUIDANCE

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Managing heat related risk in the workplace

This is a list of risks you should consider when managing and controlling the risks caused by working in heat. Has the employer considered these risks, and can he provide evidence?

| Risk factors to consider | Why this is important |
|---|---|
| Are ambient conditions hot? > 30Deg C | This contributes to incidents such as heat-related illness and burns. |
| Are days and nights hotter than usual? | A heatwave can make it harder to sleep and workers may become fatigued. Is this discussed with workers at prestart meetings? |
| Is it humid? | High humidity makes it harder for the body to cool itself. |
| When is work done? | Certain times of the day and year will be hotter. Has work been planned for cooler times of day? |
| How often can workers take breaks somewhere cool? | Working in heat for long periods of time is very dangerous. Have breaks been established and are they being taken? |
| Is there cool air movement or a breeze? | This can help cool workers. Are air-conditioned work areas, fans, shaded areas available? |
| Is the work intense or long and being performed in a harsh environment? | The harder the body is working the more heat it needs to lose. Has adequate planning taken place taking into account the work environment and task being performed? E.g., scaffolding, steel fixing, rigging etc on concrete slabs or in exposed areas. |
| Are workers physically fit and acclimatised? | Fit and acclimatised workers generally have higher heat tolerances. Have management selected suitable workers for specific tasks? |
| Do workers wear hot clothing (including PPE)? | Some clothing and PPE can prevent the evaporation of sweat or prevent air movement. |
| Are the workers qualified, trained and experienced? | Experienced workers may be more efficient and use less energy for the same work. They may also be more aware of the hazards, health effects and controls. Management need to consider this in planning tasks. |
| Have workers been trained in heat and fatigue awareness? | Trained workers have more chance of identifying symptoms and preventing over exposure and the onset of heat related health issues. |
| Have supervision been trained in heat and Fatigue awareness and management? | Supervision must be able to identify contributing factors and plan work in advance to prevent over exposure and the onset of heat related health issues. |
| (If known) do workers have medical conditions? | Some conditions and medications can make workers less able to cope with heat. |
| Is there cool drinking water or electrolyte drinks on hand? | Dehydration can be dangerous and contributes to heat-related illness. |

REPORT UNSAFE WORK PRACTICES - CALL (08) 9228 6900 OR EMAIL SAFETY@CFMEUWA.COM

Stand up. Speak out. Come home.