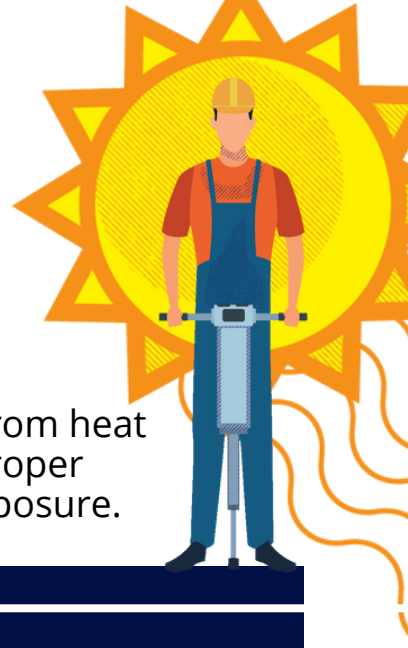


# Heat Illness Prevention

## What Workers Need to Know

This guide provides the knowledge and tools to protect yourself from heat stress while working outdoors in Louisiana. With these tips and proper training, you can avoid serious illness or even death from heat exposure.



## Prevention Practices

- Follow the [Heat Illness Prevention: Water, Rest and Shade](#) recommendations.
- Dress for the heat:
- Wear a hat.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting and breathable clothing.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Apply sunscreen before and throughout your shift.
- Stay hydrated, even after work hours.
- Voice health concerns to co-workers and supervisors.

## Risk Factors

- **Environmental conditions**
  - Air temperature, humidity, sunlight and wind.
  - Humidity makes it harder for the body to stay cool.
- **Physical activity**
  - Physical labor increases the body's heat.
  - Risk increases with duration and intensity of physical work.
  - Heat-related illness can occur at low to moderate temperatures when the workload is very heavy.
- **Clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE)**
  - Certain clothing and PPE can reduce the body's ability to cool (e.g, flame-resistant clothing).
- **Personal risk factors\***
  - Chronic health conditions\* put workers at an increased risk.
    - Heart disease
    - High blood pressure
    - Diabetes



- Use of medications and substances\* can affect body's reaction to heat.
  - Diuretics
  - Antidepressants
  - Antihistamines
  - Antihypertensives (e.g., high blood pressure medications)
  - Benzodiazepines
  - Stimulants (amphetamines, cocaine, ecstasy)
  - Ethanol (drinking alcohol)

*\*Note: This is not a complete list of chronic conditions or medications.*

## Know Signs and Symptoms and How to Respond

- **Ensure that workers know symptoms and treatments for heat illness.**
- **Implement a buddy system.**
  - Workers experiencing heat illness are often unaware they are experiencing symptoms.
  - It is recommended that workers work in pairs so they can monitor their partner's behavior for symptoms of heat illness.
  - If workers are wearing PPE that covers their faces, check in with them verbally.
- **Ensure workers know how to call for help.**
  - Call 911!
    - Call 911 immediately when suspecting serious heat illness.
    - Tell 911 the individual is experiencing heat stroke.
  - Provide first aid measures.
    - Prioritize cooling down the individual: Move him to shade, remove heavy clothing, and place ice or cool, wet cloths on the neck, armpits and groin area.
    - Workers experiencing heat illness should never be left alone.
    - Prepare to safely transport the individual.
- **Know your location and surroundings.**
  - If there is no cell service in the area, radio or walkie-talkie systems should be in place to contact someone who is able to call 911.
  - Ensure employees know how to direct emergency services to their location, especially when in a remote area.