

WORKING IN EXTREME HEAT:

What employers and workers need to know



Heat is an occupational hazard for outdoor and indoor workers that can **cause serious illness or death** when workers are not provided with necessary protections and training.

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES:

It's the law! Employers have a legal and moral duty to protect workers against heat.

At a minimum, employers should provide adequate cool water, rest breaks, and shade or a cool rest area for employees.

Give new or returning employees the chance to gradually acclimatize (or become used to working in hot temperatures), to be trained and plan for emergencies, and to monitor for heat signs/symptoms.

Train all employees on heat illness **prevention, signs** of heat illness, and how to act immediately if they or another employee appears to be suffering from a heat-related illness.

EMPLOYER RESOURCES:

Contact the **OSHA On-site Consultation Program** at **(225) 219-9446**. The program provides free, confidential consultations to help employers identify and address heat hazards and establish or improve heat illness safety plans. Services are provided by consultants from state agencies or universities. The On-site Consultation Program is different from OSHA inspections; there are no citations issued or penalties proposed.

Learn how to protect workers from occupational heat hazards at [osha.gov/heat](https://www.osha.gov/heat).

WORKER RIGHTS:

Every worker covered under the OSH Act has the right to a safe and healthy workplace. Workers can file a confidential complaint with OSHA if they believe their working conditions are unsafe or unhealthy, or if they think their employer is not following OSHA standards. Call the OSHA Baton Rouge office at **(225) 298-5458** to file a complaint.

It is illegal for any employer to fire or retaliate against a worker who complains to OSHA. Workers can file a **Whistleblower complaint** within 30 days if they believe they have been retaliated against in any way.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS AND HOW TO RESPOND :

Abnormal thinking or behavior, slurred speech, seizures, or loss of consciousness are signs of a medical emergency. Call 911 immediately, cool the worker with water or ice and stay with them until help arrives.

Heat illness can cause: headaches, nausea, weakness or dizziness, heavy sweating or hot, dry skin, elevated body temperature, thirst, and decreased urine output.

If you spot someone experiencing these signs, take immediate action.

- **Give them water to drink.**
- **Move them to a cooler area.**
- **Cool them with water, ice or a fan.**
- **Remove unnecessary clothing.**
- **Do not them leave alone at all.**
- **If in doubt, call 911 or seek medical care.**

Get more **tips** on first aid so you can be prepared in the event of an emergency.