



Persimmon

Health, Safety
& Environment
Department

Summer Working Standards



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1. Introduction

The purpose of these standards is to give guidance to ensure that work can be carried out safely during the summer months.

During the summer months temperatures can rise in excess of 30° Celsius, heat injuries can easily catch operatives out if they allow themselves to become dehydrated or work excessively hard in the heat or direct sunlight.

Heat exhaustion is not normally serious if treated immediately, however if it turns into heatstroke it must be treated as an emergency.



2. Check for signs of heat exhaustion

The signs of heat exhaustion include:

- A headache;
- Dizziness and confusion;
- Loss of appetite and feeling sick;
- Excessive sweating and pale, clammy skin;
- Cramps in the arms, legs and stomach;
- Fast breathing or pulse;
- A high temperature of 38°C or above; and
- Being very thirsty.

If someone is showing signs of heat exhaustion, they need to be cooled down.

3. What to do if someone is suffering from heat exhaustion

If someone has heat exhaustion, follow these four steps:

- Move them to a cool place;
- Get them to lie down and raise their feet slightly;
- Get them to drink plenty of water, sports or rehydration drinks are also ok; and
- Cool their skin by spraying or sponge them with cool water and fan them. If to hand, cold packs around the armpits or neck would also help.

Stay with the patient until they are feeling better, they should start to cool down and feel an improvement in their wellbeing within 30 minutes.

Even if the patient begins to feel better they must be sent home and not be permitted to work for the remainder of the day.

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4. When to seek emergency services assistance

An ambulance must be called if the patient:

- Is still feeling unwell after 30 minutes of resting in a cool place and drinking plenty of water;
- Is not sweating even while feeling too hot;
- Has a high temperature of 40°C or above;
- Has fast breathing or shortness of breath;
- Is feeling confused;
- Has a fit (seizure);
- Has loss of consciousness; and/or
- Is not responsive.

Heatstroke can be very serious if not treated quickly and the patient must be put in the recovery position if they lose consciousness whilst awaiting the emergency services.

5. Preventing heat exhaustion and heatstroke

There is a high risk of heat exhaustion or heatstroke during hot weather or carrying out physically demanding work.

To help prevent heat exhaustion or heatstroke, operatives must during the working day:

Drink plenty of cold drinks, especially when carrying out physically demanding work;

Wear light-coloured, loose clothing;

Sprinkle water over skin or clothes; and

Where possible avoid the sun between 11am and 3pm, trying to work in the shade.

Anyone with long-term health conditions, such as diabetes or heart problems are more susceptible to heat exhaustion or heat stroke and should be extra diligent about keeping hydrated and out of direct sunlight.



6. Drinking water on site

A wholesome supply of drinking water must be available on site. If the water pipe supplying the canteen is surface laid, the water will heat up in the pipes, wasting precious water when running the taps to get the water to turn cold. If a site suffers from heated pipes during summer months then consider installing a plumbed in water cooler or other alternative arrangements for getting fresh, cool drinking water to site.

7. Air Conditioning for site offices

Most site offices are the Porto Cabin type construction, made of metal panels. These cabins can become unbearably hot during the summer months, especially in the southern areas of the country in site offices that are in direct sunlight. Therefore where appropriate air conditioning should be hired to combat this heat in order to keep the temperatures to a sensible level.



8. Sun Protection

Sun protection with a high SPF (minimum of SPF 50) must be made available for operatives on each site.

Operatives must wear a tee shirt under their high-visibility vests (or a high-visibility tee shirt / polo shirt) and the tee shirt and high-visibility vest must not be cut down or tied up so that bare flesh is exposed to the sun.

Operatives must also wear suitable trousers or short trousers on site that adequately protects them from the adverse effects of the sun.

Where appropriate plant operators must be issued with sun protective eyewear, if they are at risk of being dazzled by the sun when operating the plant.

9. Reporting

Any heat injury must reported via the accident/ incident reporting procedure.

10. Monitoring

Site management must continually monitor operatives for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. The HS&E Department will monitor compliance of these standards during routine HS&E inspections.

11. Further Reading

[HSE-heat stress](#)

[NHS-heat exhaustion and heatstroke](#)

12. Toolbox Talk

Refer to HSMS [TBT](#) – Summer Working

