



Pacific Maritime Association

Accident Prevention Department

555 Market Street,

San Francisco, California 94105

SAFETY BULLETIN # 04-13

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Washington Standard for Heat Illness

Overview:

The Washington State standard for heat illness has been in-place since 1999, however since the effective dates run from May 1st through September 30th of each calendar year, this is a good time to review the requirements. The Washington rules apply to outdoor places of work for our industry. The regulations include WAC 296-62-095 through WAC 296-62-09560 and can be found at; <http://www.lni.wa.gov/WISHA/Rules/generaloccupationalhealth/HTML/62j-1.htm#wac296-62-095>

The main and unique points of these regulations for management are:

- Regulations are active from May 1 to Sept 30 yearly only when employees are exposed to outdoor heat at or above an applicable temperature listed in WAC 296-62-05910 “Table 1”.
- Requires a written heat exposure safety program within the written accident prevention program (APP).
- Supervisors must be trained prior to outdoor work which exceeds a temperature listed in the “Table 1” AND ANNUALLY THERE AFTER.
- Employees who may be exposed to outdoor heat at or above temperatures in the “Table 1” must be trained in a language they understand before exposure, AND ANNUALLY THERE AFTER.
- These Heat Illness rules do not apply to incidental exposure which exists if an employee is not required to perform a work activity outdoors for more than fifteen minutes in any sixty minute period. This exception may be applied every hour during the work shift..

WAC 296-62-09510 “Table 1” Outdoor Temperature Action Levels

All other clothing	89°
Double-layer woven clothes including coveralls, jackets and sweatshirts	77°
Non-breathing clothes including vapor barrier clothing or PPE such as chemical resistant suits	52°

Note that the heat triggers vary widely depending on the weight layering and breathability of the work clothes the employee is wearing.

The regulations stress the importance of keeping hydrated, and mandate that the employer supply a “sufficient quantity” of drinking water and encourage workers to drink it even if they are not thirsty.

Additionally the regulations provide that the employer must give the employee the “opportunity” to consume the water.

Employer Responsibility:

- Employees showing the signs or demonstrating symptoms of heat related illness must be relieved from duty and provided with a sufficient means to reduce body temperature
- Employees showing signs or demonstrating symptoms of heat related illness must be monitored to determine whether medical attention is necessary.

Employee Responsibility:

- Employees are responsible to monitor their own personal factors for heat related illness including consumption of water or other acceptable beverages to ensure hydration.

Training:

These regulations require training of Supervisors and Employees in a language understood by both parties prior to exposure and at least annually thereafter.

Employee Training. Is required in the following topics to the employee who may be exposed to temperatures at or above the temperatures listed in “Table 1”.

- (a) The environmental factors that contribute to the risk of heat-related illness;
- (b) General awareness of personal factors that may increase susceptibility to heat-related illness including, but not limited to, an individual's age, degree of acclimatization, medical conditions, drinking water consumption, alcohol use, caffeine use, nicotine use, and use of medications that affect the body's responses to heat. This information is for the employee's personal use;
- (c) The importance of removing heat-retaining personal protective equipment such as non-breathable chemical resistant clothing during all breaks;
- (d) The importance of frequent consumption of small quantities of drinking water or other acceptable beverages;
- (e) The importance of acclimatization;
- (f) The different types of heat-related illness, the common signs and symptoms of heat-related illness; and
- (g) The importance of immediately reporting signs or symptoms of heat-related illness in either themselves or in co-workers to the person in charge and the procedures the employee must follow including appropriate emergency response procedures.

Supervisor Training. Prior to supervising employees working in outdoor environments with heat exposure at or above the temperature levels in “Table 1”, supervisors must have training on the following topics:

- (a) The information required to be provided to employees as listed above;
- (b) The procedures the supervisor must follow to implement the applicable provisions of WAC 296-62-095 through 296-62-09560;
- (c) The procedures the supervisor must follow if an employee exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with possible heat-related illness, including appropriate emergency response procedures; and
- (d) Procedures for moving or transporting an employee(s) to a place where the employee(s) can be reached by an emergency medical service provider, if necessary.

DOSH has a number of training materials listed on its website as noted in the References below. PMA has tried to include all the employee training points in the current Heat Stress Safety Tip Flyer (5-2011)

Employers should take note of these regulations.

References:

DOSH - Heat Illness Regulations

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WISHA/Rules/generaloccupationalhealth/HTML/62j-1.htm#wac296-62-095>

DOSH Directive 10.15 *Outdoor Heat Exposure Enforcement Procedures* Rev 5-26-2009

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Rules/Policies/PDFs/WRD1015.pdf>

WA Heat Illness Training Materials

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/safety/traintools/trainer/kits/HeatIllness/default.asp>