

HEAT STRESS

Know It, Spot It, Stop It

Heat stress is a serious workplace hazard. It can affect anyone and increases the risk of mistakes, injuries, and medical emergencies if it's not caught early.

Heat stress is preventable. Early action saves lives.

KNOW HOW TO SPOT IT AND STOP IT:

- EXPOSURE TO HEAT
- EARLY WARNING SIGNS
- HOW TO MANAGE AND CONTROL



BC Forest Safety

Safety is good business

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HOW WORKERS ARE EXPOSED TO HEAT:

Heat stress usually comes from one or more of these three sources:

1. **The Environment**

Direct sunlight or heat reflected off pavement and surfaces
Heat from equipment like boilers, kilns, ovens, or smelters
High air temperature and high humidity

2. **The Work**

The harder or more physical the work, the more heat your body produces

3. **The Worker**

Medical conditions that affect heat tolerance
Not drinking enough fluids
Wearing PPE or protective clothing that traps heat and reduces sweating

EARLY WARNING SIGNS - SPEAK UP EARLY:

Heat stress often starts before it becomes an emergency. Watch for these signs in yourself and others:

- Heavy sweating, Muscle cramps, Weakness, Fatigue, or dizziness, Nausea
- Heat stress can also affect focus and reaction time, increasing the risk of incidents.

SERIOUS SYMPTOMS - THIS IS AN EMERGENCY:

If heat stress is not treated early, it can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Do not ignore these signs. Call for help right away.

- Confusion, agitation, or unusual behaviour
- Fast or irregular heartbeat
- Reduced alertness or loss of consciousness or seizures.

HOW TO CONTROL HEAT STRESS:

Eliminate /reduce the heat

- Delay or reschedule work
- Move work to cooler areas
- Reduce heavy or strenuous tasks when possible

Engineering controls

- Ventilation and air conditioning
- Insulating or shielding hot surfaces
- Barriers to radiant heat
- Automation where possible

Administrative controls

- Work-rest cycles
- Job rotation
- Cool-down areas with access to cool water
- Scheduling work to avoid the hottest times of day

PPE

- PPE is not usually effective for heat stress
- Some PPE can make heat stress worse
- Specialized cooling or reflective gear may be used only when appropriate



Scan the QR code to access WorkSafeBC's Methods of Measuring Heat Strain or Stress



Scan the QR code to access all BCFSC Crew Talks and to subscribe.