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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices!®

June 15, 2015

SCI Safety News: As temps climb, OSHA chief pushes for protection from heat

Date: June 8, 2015

Source: <http://www.blr.com>



Every year, hundreds die and thousands fall ill due to extreme heat. OSHA is taking additional steps this year to help employers protect their workers. Keep reading to find out what's new and what you can do today.

In a joint media teleconference with Laura Furgione of the National Weather Service, OSHA administrator David Michaels, PhD, laid out risks and solutions. He announced enhancements to OSHA's *Heat Safety Tool* smartphone app, which allows workers and supervisors to calculate the heat index at their worksite.

The app lets the user know instantly if workers are in the high-risk zone due to heat and humidity and indicates the necessary precautions to take. It was recently updated for iOS to be more intuitive and now includes the daily maximum temperature so that employers can plan work around the hottest part of the day, moving the most strenuous tasks to cooler hours and taking appropriate precautions when risk is highest. The new version of the iOS app offers a full screen color alert and improved navigation. The app is free and available for iPhone and Android at https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html.
Awareness—the low-tech tool for preventing heat illness
Michaels relayed the tragic story of a worker who died last year in

SCI Safety Slogan



***Beat the Heat!
Stay hydrated!***

James Lehrke-SCI

Illinois. As he and others worked on a roof, the temperature registered 90 degrees Fahrenheit, but humidity and full sunlight made it feel like 105. During lunch, co-workers noticed his altered speech, disorientation, and motor problems, signs of heat illness.

The worker died of heatstroke after being taken to a local hospital. According to OSHA, the employer did not have an adequate heat illness prevention program and did not train workers in how to respond. OSHA's heat campaign, now in its fourth year, is intended to prevent such incidents.

Said Michaels, "My message to workers is three simple words—water, rest, and shade. These precautions can mean the difference between life and death." For employers, this means providing access to water and breaks so workers can cool down out of the sun.

OSHA and the National Weather Service (NWS) are teaming up to improve awareness about dangerous heat conditions. During the teleconference, NWS Deputy Director Laura Furgione cited Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) statistics pointing to 658 heat-related deaths between 1999 and 2009. She said the weather service now provides better warnings about the risks and called on meteorologists to include information about worker safety during their broadcasts. NWS has created a new heat safety page at <http://www.weather.gov/rah/heat>.

Calling heat "a silent hazard," Furgione emphasized that workers often do not recognize when they are in trouble. "Hyperthermic conditions set in before they know that they need medical assistance, which sometimes comes too late." She added that men, frequently working outdoors on construction sites and often young and seemingly invincible, are at highest risk.

Furgione also underscored the tragic consequences of leaving children in hot vehicles. Since 1998, 630 children have died, and four have already succumbed this year.

SCI OSHA Compliance: Prevent injuries and OSHA citations with these warehouse safety tips (Part 2)

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

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How do these solutions stack up against your warehouse practices?

Docks

- Drive forklifts slowly on docks and dock plates.
- Secure plates and check to see if the plate can safely support the load
- Provide visual warnings near dock edges.
- Make sure ladders and stairs meet OSHA specifications.

Forklifts

- Train, evaluate, and certify all operators.
- Prohibit anyone under age 18 from operating a forklift.
- Train employees to examine equipment for hazards before using.
- Never drive more than 5 miles per hour, and slow down in congested areas.
- Maintain sufficiently safe clearances for aisles.
- Train employees on the hazards associated with combustion-related byproducts of forklift operation, such as carbon monoxide.

Conveyors

- Inspect conveyors regularly.
- Ensure that pinch points are adequately guarded.
- Develop ways to lock out conveyors.

Material storage

- Stack loads straight and evenly.



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Quick Tips for Healthy Living

Body Mechanics and Safety

We all know to use our legs when we lift and keep our backs straight while sitting, but there are many more ways we could be putting ourselves at risk for injury using improper body mechanics. Below are some tips that don't take any money to implement, but can save money in workers' compensation claims and lost time due to pain or injury.

1. **Avoid Twisting.** If you need to turn around, whether or not you are lifting an object, take an extra step instead of turning at the waist or knees. Pivoting on the knees or rotating the back can cause extra stress on the joints whether it is done repetitively or just once.
2. **Bend at the hips and knees** when picking something off the ground. Avoid keeping your knees straight while bending over to reduce stress on your back.
3. **Work as close as possible to the task at hand.** Of course you don't want to be confined to a small space while working, but refraining from reaching to perform tasks is easier on both the upper extremities and back.
4. **Carry your load as close to your body as possible.** The further an object is away from the body, the more stress is applied to the back. Typically, holding a load in front of you at arm's reach increases the stress on your back 10 times.
5. **Never use your hand (or any body part) as a hammer.** Sometimes it is much more convenient to manipulate an object with your hand instead of the proper tool, but this is very dangerous and can lead to traumatic injury.
6. **Early intervention is key.** If you notice pain from an unknown cause while working, or have pain that has not been improving, inform your safety professional. Catching ergonomic problems or improper body mechanics early can reduce the likelihood of further pain or injury.

Remember, your body is your most important tool!

- Place heavier loads on lower or middle shelves.
- Train employees to remove one object at a time from shelves.
- Keep aisles and passageways clear and in good repair.

Manual lifting/handling

- Provide ergonomics awareness training.
- Train workers in proper lifting.
- Minimize the need for lifting by using engineering controls, adjusting work practices, and providing hand trucks and other material handling aids.

Hazard communication

- Maintain a safety data sheet for each hazardous chemical to which workers are exposed.
- Train employees on the risks of all stored chemicals.
- Provide spill cleanup kits.
- Develop and implement a written spill control plan.
- Store chemicals safely and securely, away from forklift traffic areas.

Small warehouse safety improvements yield big benefits

One New Jersey warehouse was averaging two back injuries a month. Leadership decided that was two too many and adopted several OSHA recommendations for reducing ergonomic risk factors. Not only did the site see an elimination of back injuries, but it also experienced an improvement in morale and productivity among the facility's 50 employees.

Controls implemented included:

- Adjusting the height of shelves.
- Providing stools or ladders to employees.
- Reducing the depth of shelving.
- Raising loading heights.

Evaluating the flow and volume of orders so that faster-moving products were placed on more accessible shelves.



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