



Working Safely in Hot Weather

Workers performing activities in high temperatures and humid conditions are at risk for heat-related illness; every year, thousands become sick from occupational heat exposure, and some cases are fatal. To prevent heat related incidents drink plenty of water, rest in the shade to cool down, wear light-colored clothing, try to stay away from hot or heavy foods, and be aware that water, concrete, and sand reflect the sun and can make it stronger.



Heat-Related Illness and Symptoms and Signs

Heat stroke

- Confusion
- Slurred speech
- Unconsciousness
- Seizures
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin
- Very high body temperature
- Rapid heart rate

Heat exhaustion

- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Thirst
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Heavy sweating
- Elevated body temperature or fast heart rate

Heat cramps

- Muscle spasms or pain
- Usually in legs, arms, or trunk

Heat syncope

- Fainting
- Dizziness

Heat rash

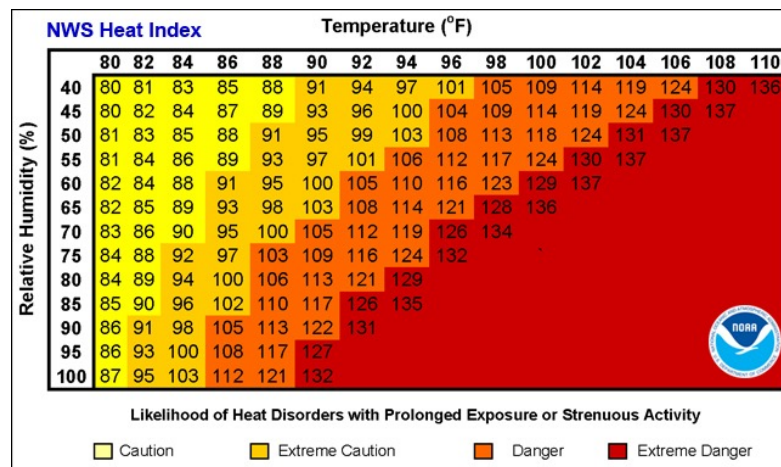
- Clusters of red bumps on skin
- Often appears on neck, upper chest, and skin folds

Rhabdomyolysis (muscle breakdown)

- Muscle pain
- Dark urine or reduced urine output
- Weakness

First aid for heat-related illness:

- Take the affected worker to a cooler area (e.g., shade or air conditioning).
- Cool the worker immediately. Use active cooling techniques such as:
 - Immerse the worker in cold water or an ice bath. Create the ice bath by placing all available ice into a large container with water, standard practice in sports. **This is the best method to cool workers rapidly in an emergency.**
 - Remove outer layers of clothing, especially heavy protective clothing.
 - Place ice or cold wet towels on the head, neck, trunk, armpits, and groin.
 - Use fans to circulate air around the worker.
- Never leave a worker with heat-related illness alone. The illness can rapidly become worse. Stay with the worker.
- When in doubt, call 911!



The OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool App is a useful resource for planning outdoor work activities based on how hot it feels throughout the day.