

# Heat Illness Prevention Programs

Jacki Mortenson, Risk Manager

## As you all felt this week...the heat is on!

**Heat Illness Prevention Programs** at our work places are still Cal/OSHA's #1 citation this time of year regardless if your work production is outdoors or indoors. Heat is heat and employees getting injured from it inside or outside is preventable! So let's combat heat illness on the job by doing the following:

1. Train your employees to recognize what heat illness is and how to take care of themselves! This is an annual training requirement that can be simply done by briefing/documenting this month's safety newsletter.
2. Have your supervisors conduct shade and water assessments on the job site. Do your employees have both available to them when temps are going to rise above 85 degrees?



3. Does your business NEED to have a written Heat Illness Prevention Program? If the extent of your scope of business requires your supervisors to do and know the following, then yes lets work on drafting you a written heat illness prevention program.

The new standard requires an employer's heat illness prevention procedures to be in writing and made available to employees and to representatives of Cal/OSHA upon request. These written procedures must include:

- How an employer will comply with the heat illness standard requirements.
- How to respond to symptoms of possible heat illness, including how emergency medical services will be provided.
- How to contact emergency medical services, and if necessary, how employees will be transported to a point where they can be reached by an emergency medical service provider.
- How they will ensure that, in the event of an emergency, clear and precise directions to the work site can and will be provided as needed to emergency responders.

Here are a few **financial facts** for supporting your own heat illness prevention program:

- Average worker compensation claim for injuries related to excessive heat exposure: \$3,682
- Average cost per worker for a disabling lost-time injury (3 or more days): \$26,540
- These numbers do not include any indirect costs
- Average time loss days per HRI claim: 53 days
- For a fatal accident, the average economic cost by class and severity is approximately \$1.35 million (per fatality)

### UPDATE: For Indoor Heat Illness:

Heat stress can still occur in indoor working environments..

Cal/OSHA Indoor Title 8 § 3203 (Injury and Illness Prevention Program)

Five Preventive Actions to include in Indoor Heat Stress Preventative Plan:

1. Frequent drinking of water/electrolytes
2. Rest in cooler areas
3. Give time to acclimatize
4. Know signs & symptoms
5. Know emergency steps