

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Cal/OSHA Reminds Employers of Risks of Heat Illness: Record Temperatures Expected this Weekend

Oakland – Cal/OSHA reminds all employers across the state to protect their outdoor workers from the risks associated with heat illness. With temperatures expected to reach triple digits throughout much of the state by the end of this week and carrying into the weekend, constant vigilance is especially necessary to protect workers during periods of high heat.

“Cal/OSHA continues to enforce the nation’s most comprehensive heat illness prevention regulations, and we will continue to work with both labor and management to ensure that workers stay well on the job,” said Christine Baker, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR). Cal/OSHA, also known as the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, is a division of DIR.

“Adequate water, shade, rest breaks, training and emergency procedures can mean the difference between life and death,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Ellen Widess. “We are focusing on those industries where outdoor work is performed: agriculture, construction and landscaping to name a few. We will use all available enforcement tools to target employers who skirt the law and put the health of their workers at risk.”

Late this week and continuing through the weekend, excessive heat is expected in the Inland Empire, Central Valley and southern deserts, with record temperatures of over 110 degrees possible.

California’s [heat regulation](#) requires all employers with outdoor workers take basic steps to protect their workers:

- Train all employees and supervisors about heat illness prevention before work begins.
- Provide plenty of cool, fresh water and encourage employees to drink water frequently.
- Provide a readily accessible shaded area for workers to take a cool down recovery break.
- Ensure that workers are given enough time to adjust, or “acclimatize” to the heat. This is especially important for new workers and for all workers during a sudden heat wave. This step can mean the difference between life and death.
- Prepare an emergency heat illness prevention plan for the worksite, with training for supervisors and workers on the steps to take if a worker shows signs or symptoms of heat illness.

Special “High Heat” procedures are also required when temperatures reach 95 degrees and workers are at greater risk. At these times, supervisors must take extra precautions:

- Observe workers for signs and symptoms of heat illness.
- Remind workers to drink water frequently.
- Provide close supervision of workers in the first 14 days of their employment (to ensure acclimatization).
- Have effective communication systems in place to be able to summon emergency assistance if necessary.

Cal/OSHA will inspect worksites in outdoor industries such as agriculture, construction, landscaping, and others throughout the heat season. Through partnerships with various employer and worker organizations in different industries, Cal/OSHA will also provide consultation, outreach and training on heat illness prevention to employers and employees.

Online information on the heat illness prevention requirements and training materials can be obtained at [Cal/OSHA’s Heat Illness web page](#) or the [Water. Rest. Shade.](#) campaign site. A [Heat Illness Prevention e-tool](#) is available on Cal/OSHA’s [website](#), and more information can be found on DIR’s [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

Cal/OSHA’s [Consultation Program](#) provides free and voluntary assistance to employers and employee organizations to improve their health and safety programs. For assistance from the Cal/OSHA Consultation Program, employers can call (800) 963-9424.

Employees with workplace safety questions or complaints, including heat illness, can contact the [Cal/OSHA district office](#) in their region to file a confidential report. Recorded messages in English and Spanish detailing resources for California workers are also available toll free at 1-866-924-9757.

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