

NEWS RELEASE

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Cal/OSHA Amended Heat Safety Regulations in Effect May 1

Sacramento—The Department of Industrial Relations, in conjunction with Cal/OSHA, announce amendments to the current [heat illness prevention regulation](#). The Occupational Safety & Health Standards Board's [proposed amendments](#) to the California Code of Regulations, Title 8 §3395, have been approved by the Office of Administrative Law and become effective May 1, 2015 to address this year's anticipated warmer weather.

A [guidance document for employers and employees](#) on these new requirements, as well as an updated [Heat Illness Prevention Enforcement Q&A](#) section are now available on Cal/OSHA's website.

“The new heat illness prevention requirements offer additional safeguards for outdoor workers,” said Christine Baker, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations. “With warmer weather expected, these new requirements give employers tools to prevent and deal with serious heat-related medical conditions that can happen to employees on the job.” Cal/OSHA is a division within DIR.

The revisions in the heat illness prevention regulation include the following:

- Water must be pure, suitably cool, and provided free to workers. It must be located as close as practicable to where employees are working so they can hydrate frequently during their shift.
- When temperatures exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit, shade is required for all workers on break, and for all those who take their meal periods onsite. For climates cooler than 80 degrees, shade must still be made available upon request.
- Workers who take cool-down rest breaks must be monitored and asked if they are experiencing heat illness symptoms.
- High-heat procedures have been modified for the agriculture industry to mandate one 10-minute preventative cool-down rest break every two hours when temperatures equal or exceed 95 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Employers must ensure that supervisors and workers are adequately trained to recognize and react to heat illness signs or symptoms and how to contact emergency medical services (EMS).

- Any workers who display or report any signs or symptoms of heat illness, must not be left alone or sent home without being offered on-site first aid or emergency medical services.
- All workers must be closely observed during a heat wave.
- Any worker newly assigned to a high-heat area must be observed by a supervisor or designee during the first 14 days of employment.
- Training must be provided for all outdoor workers before starting any work involving heat illness risk. The training must be presented in a language that employees understand, and must be documented.

“These modifications will help further reduce the heat-related risks associated with working outdoors,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum.” The changes provide valuable information to help employers understand how to prevent heat illness in the workplace, and our goal is to help them comply with the new requirements.”

With unusually high temperatures predicted for summer 2015, [Cal/OSHA urges employers with outdoor workers to prepare for high heat now](#). Preparation is essential to prevent heat illness which can include headaches, fatigue, excessive sweating and muscle cramps in the early stages, and can rapidly progress to mental confusion, vomiting, fainting, seizures and death.

Cal/OSHA offers additional online information and resources on [heat illness prevention](#) with illustrated fact sheets, videos, and training kits available in multiple languages. These resources also include details on free training for all employers with outdoor worksites in both Northern and Southern California.

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The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). For non-media inquiries, contact DIR's Communications Call Center at 1-844-LABOR-DIR (1-844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.