



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Cal/OSHA Launches 2013 Heat Illness Prevention Campaign**

**Fresno**—Today, Cal/OSHA launches its 2013 Heat Illness Prevention Program to educate workers and employers on the dangers associated with heat exposure at outdoor worksites. The launch was announced at a training program sponsored by Cal/OSHA, the Nisei Farmers League and other agricultural employers. The goal is to prevent heat illness throughout California through greater compliance with the state's workplace safety regulations.

“California is a better place to work because of our standard and partnerships with employers and labor to protect all outdoor workers from heat illness. As we enter this year's heat season, it is important we continue our efforts to address heat illness prevention at outdoor worksites,” said Christine Baker, director of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR). The Division of Occupational Safety and Health, commonly known as Cal/OSHA, is a division within the DIR.

Cal/OSHA's nationally recognized heat illness prevention campaign takes a multi-faceted approach to combating heat illness. Enforcement, outreach and training are some of the measures being taken to educate workers and employers on the dangers of heat illness.

“By following the basic preventive measures of providing adequate water, rest, shade, training and emergency procedures at every outdoor worksite, we can avoid needless tragedies and make sure workers go home healthy after a hard day's work,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Ellen Widess.

As California braces for continued high heat throughout the state, it's important for all employers in agriculture, construction, landscaping, and other outdoor industries to take basic steps to protect their workers:

- Train all employees and supervisors about heat illness prevention.
- Provide plenty of cool, fresh water and encourage employees to drink water frequently.
- Provide a shaded area for workers to take a cool down recovery break.
- Ensure that workers are given enough time to get used to the heat, or “acclimatize” to the heat. This is especially important for new workers, as well as for all workers during a sudden heat wave.
- 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.

When temperatures reach 95 degrees and workers are at greater risk, Cal/OSHA regulations require special “High Heat” procedures and 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 has continued its effective statewide public awareness campaign that targets the most underserved populations of outdoor workers and includes messages in Spanish, Punjabi, Hmong, Mixteco and Trique. The award-winning *Water. Rest. Shade* campaign is a multifaceted initiative combining outdoor and radio announcements with written materials and a safety DVD in the targeted languages as well as outreach efforts.

Through partnerships with various employer and worker organizations in different industries, Cal/OSHA's [Consultation Program](#) will provide consultation, outreach and training on heat illness prevention to employers and employees. Cal/OSHA inspections at outdoor worksites in industries such as agriculture, construction, landscaping, and others will also continue throughout the heat season.

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](#) as well as on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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 Cal/OSHA's 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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