

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Cal/OSHA Reminds Employers to Protect Outdoor Workers from Heat Illness as Temperatures Rise Statewide

Oakland—Cal/OSHA is reminding all employers to protect their outdoor workers from heat illness and to encourage their workers to take preventative cool-down breaks in the shade as temperatures rise throughout California. The [National Weather Service](#) has issued excessive heat warnings for forecasts of triple-digit temperatures through the weekend, starting on Thursday in Southern California and beginning Friday in [central and northern counties](#).

“During heat waves, employers must closely observe their employees for signs and symptoms of heat illness,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. “As always, workers should be encouraged to drink water frequently and take preventative cool-down rest breaks in the shade when they feel the need to do so.”

California’s [heat illness prevention regulation](#) requires employers with outdoor workers to take the following four steps to prevent heat illness:

- Plan – Develop and implement an effective written heat illness prevention plan that includes emergency response procedures.
- Training – Train all employees and supervisors on heat illness prevention.
- Water – Provide drinking water that is fresh, pure, suitably cool and free of charge so that each worker can drink at least 1 quart per hour, and *encourage workers to do so*.
- Shade – Provide shade when workers request it and when temperatures exceed 80 degrees. Encourage workers to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least five minutes. *They should not wait until they feel sick to cool down.*

Cal/OSHA urges workers experiencing possible overheating to take a preventative cool-down rest in the shade until symptoms are gone. Workers who have existing health problems or medical conditions that reduce tolerance to heat, such as diabetes, need to be extra vigilant. Some high blood pressure and anti-inflammatory medications can also increase a worker’s risk for heat illness.

In addition to the other requirements outlined in [California's heat illness prevention regulation](#), it is crucial that supervisors are effectively trained on emergency procedures in case a worker does get sick. This helps ensure sick employees receive treatment immediately and that the symptoms do not develop into a serious illness or death.

Cal/OSHA's Heat Illness Prevention special emphasis program, the first of its kind in the nation, includes enforcement of heat regulations as well as multilingual outreach and training programs for California's employers and workers. Online information on heat illness prevention requirements and training materials are available on Cal/OSHA's [Heat Illness Prevention web page](#) and the [Water. Rest. Shade. campaign site](#). A [Heat Illness Prevention e-tool](#) is also available on Cal/OSHA's website.

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. Employers and workers who have questions or need assistance with workplace health and safety programs can call [Cal/OSHA's Consultation Services Branch](#) at 800-963-9424.

Complaints about workplace safety and health hazards can be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA district offices](#). Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR's Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734).

Members of the press may contact Peter Melton or Frank Polizzi at (510) 286-1161, and are encouraged to [subscribe to get email alerts](#) on DIR's press releases or other departmental updates.

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