

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Cal/OSHA Reminds Employers to Protect Outdoor Workers from Heat Illness

**Oakland**—Temperatures at outdoor worksites across California are rising as the weather warms up. On Friday, Cal/OSHA will participate in a news conference and training sessions to help employers plan for and prevent heat-related illness and death from affecting outdoor workers.

Cal/OSHA's heat illness prevention model includes annual trainings statewide in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). On Friday, Nisei Farmers League and nine other agricultural employers will co-sponsor training sessions in Easton in both languages. This collaborative training has been held every year since 2008 to protect outdoor workers from heat illness and to highlight the requirements of the state's heat illness prevention standard.

Next Tuesday, April 16, Cal/OSHA will host a [Heat Illness Prevention Network](#) conference call to review best practices and allow for questions and answers.

“When it comes to preventing heat illness, employers with outdoor workers should not wait until it gets hot to review their procedures and ensure their training is effective,” said Cal/OSHA Heat and Agriculture Program Coordinator David Hornung. “Workers should know the signs and symptoms of heat illness and what to do in case someone gets sick. This helps prevent serious and fatal heat illnesses while working outdoors.”

Heat illness is a serious hazard for people who work outdoors. Cal/OSHA's investigates heat-related incidents and complaints of hazards at outdoor worksites in industries such as agriculture, landscaping and construction. These investigations ensure compliance with the [heat illness prevention standard](#) and the [injury and illness prevention standard](#), which require employers to take the following basic precautions:

1. Train all employees and supervisors on heat illness prevention.
2. Provide enough fresh water so that each employee can drink at least 1 quart per hour, or four 8-ounce glasses of water per hour, and *encourage them to do so*.
3. Provide access to shade and encourage employees to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least 5 minutes. They should not wait until they feel sick to cool down. *Shade structures must be in place upon request or when temperatures exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit.*

4. Closely observe all employees during a heat wave and any employee newly assigned to a high heat area. Lighter work, frequent breaks or shorter hours will help employees who have not been working in high temperatures adapt to the new conditions.
5. Develop and implement written procedures for complying with the Cal/OSHA heat illness prevention standard, including plans on how to handle medical emergencies and steps to take if someone shows signs or symptoms of heat illness

“We continue to conduct outreach, training, and enforcement to ensure the heat illness prevention standard is followed and outdoor workers have access to the water, rest and shade that keeps them healthy,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum.

The most frequent heat-related violation that Cal/OSHA cites during enforcement inspections is for failure to have an effective written heat illness prevention plan specific to the worksite. Serious heat-related violations are often related to inadequate access to water and shade, and to a lack of supervisor and employee training.

Additional information about heat illness prevention, including details on upcoming training sessions throughout the state are posted on Cal/OSHA’s [Heat Illness Prevention](#) page. Cal/OSHA also has extensive multilingual materials for employers, workers and trainers on its [Water. Rest. Shade.](#) public awareness campaign website.

Questions related to heat illness prevention should be directed to [Cal/OSHA’s Consultation Services Branch](#), which provides free and voluntary assistance to employers and employee organizations to improve their health and safety programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from Cal/OSHA Consultation Services.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR’s Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734). The California Workers’ Information line at 866-924-9757 provides recorded information in English and Spanish on a variety of work-related topics. Complaints can also be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA district offices](#).

Members of the press may contact Erika Monterroza or Frank Polizzi at (510) 286-1161. The public is also encouraged to [subscribe to get email alerts](#) on DIR’s press releases or other departmental updates.

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