

## N E W S   R E L E A S E

News Release No.: 2019-49

Date: June 19, 2019

### **Cal/OSHA Urges Employers to Adopt Effective Procedures to Protect All Outdoor Workers from Heat Illness**

**Oakland**—Cal/OSHA is urging all employers to protect outdoor workers from heat illness as temperatures in parts of California will remain over 90 and 100 degrees for the next two weeks. The [National Weather Service](#) has issued a heat advisory for a period of hot weather this week in the north including parts of Shasta, Butte, Lake and Sacramento counties. In Central and Southern California, including Fresno, Kern, San Bernardino and Riverside counties, temperatures are forecasted to reach and remain at 100 and the high 90s this week and next.

California's [heat illness prevention standard](#) applies to all outdoor workers, including those in agriculture, construction and landscaping. Other workers protected by the standard include those that spend a significant amount of time working outdoors such as security guards and groundskeepers, or in non-air conditioned vehicles such as transportation and delivery drivers.

It is important for employers to assess the risk of heat illness based on a worker's duties and take appropriate steps to prevent them from getting sick. For example, the risk of heat illness is less for an installation worker who arrives in an air-conditioned vehicle and spends one hour working outdoors than for a driver who makes deliveries in a non-air conditioned vehicle. Regardless of the level of risk, all outdoor workers must be protected equally and employers with outdoor workers must maintain an effective heat illness prevention plan year-round.

Employers with outdoor workers must take the following 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 or 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.

To prevent heat illness, it is crucial that supervisors are effectively trained on emergency procedures in case a worker gets 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. Detail on heat illness prevention requirements and training materials are available online on Cal/OSHA's [Heat Illness Prevention web page](#) and the [99calor.org](#) informational website. A [Heat Illness Prevention online 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 Erika Monterroza 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.

###



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 general inquiries, contact DIR's Call Center at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.