



SQUINCER HYDRATION SOLUTIONS

OSHA's NEP on OUTDOOR & INDOOR HEAT HAZARDS

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has announced a National Emphasis Program (NEP) focused on heat hazards, effective April 8, 2022. Under the NEP, OSHA will be conducting proactive inspections for heat-related hazards—in both outdoor and indoor work environments. It thus behooves employers to ensure they have implemented appropriate safety measures to protect employees from such hazards before potentially coming under OSHA's heat lamp spotlight.

The NEP marks the most recent in a series of OSHA efforts to address heat hazards in the workplace. In the fall of 2021, OSHA announced a National Enforcement Initiative and published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which is the first step on the long path to a federal heat standard.

Employers should understand what the NEP outlines as triggers to conduct heat-related inspections:

- When conducting other, non-heat-related investigations, OSHA will open a heat-related inspection into any hazardous heat conditions observed or reported.
- When the heat index is expected to be 80 degrees Fahrenheit or more (so-called "heat priority days"), OSHA will inquire about heat-related hazard prevention programs during inspections.
- When the National Weather Service (NWS) has announced a heat warning or advisory for a local area, OSHA will use neutral, objective criteria to select employers for pre-planned inspections in high-risk industries in that area—including foundries, warehouses, farming, waste collection, and residential construction, among many others.
- When the Wage & Hour Division of the Department of Labor (WHD) is investigating reported inadequate working or living conditions or wages, WHD is encouraged to refer information about potential heat-related hazards to OSHA.

Employers should be cognizant, particularly on hot days that the NEP mandates several steps OSHA must take in inspecting heat-related hazards, including but not limited to:

- Review injury and illness logs and incident reports for entries indicating heat-related illness;
- Review records of heat-related emergency room visits and/or ambulance transport, even if hospitalization did not occur;
- Interview workers for heat illness symptoms like headache, dizziness, fainting, dehydration, etc.;
- Determine if the employer maintains a heat illness and injury prevention program, and consider whether the program addresses hydration, breaks, shade, acclimatization, training, and other relevant policies; and
- Document relevant conditions, such as the heat index, any NWS heat alerts, type of heat source (e.g., direct sunlight, proximity to furnace), any injured employee's exertion level and duration of exposure to heat, and the like.



SQWINCHER HYDRATION SOLUTIONS HEAT HAZARD PREVENTION METHODS



Employers—especially those in the targeted industries—should consider several steps now to best protect themselves and their employees:

- Ensure their safety policies address heat-related hazards
- Implement acclimatization periods for new employees
- Develop a means to monitor the heat index and employee exposure to heat
- Train employees on heat-related illness and emergency response

Epidemiology

Every year, dozens of workers die and thousands more become ill while working in extreme heat or humid conditions. More than 40 percent of heat-related worker deaths occur in the construction industry, but workers in every field are susceptible. There are a range of heat illnesses and they can affect anyone, regardless of age or physical condition.

Prevention

Under OSHA law, employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards. This includes protecting workers from extreme heat. An employer with workers exposed to high temperatures should establish a complete heat illness prevention program.

Heat Illness Prevention Program Key Elements:

- A Person Designated to Oversee the Heat Illness Prevention Program
- Hazard Identification
- Hydration - Rest - Shade
- Acclimatization (New workers & workers returning from time off)
- Modified Work Schedules
- Training
- Monitoring for Signs and Symptoms
- Emergency Planning and Response

Occupational Factors that May Contribute to Heat Illness:

- High temperature and humidity
- Low fluid consumption
- Direct sun exposure (with no shade) or extreme heat
- Limited air movement (no breeze or wind)
- Physical exertion
- Use of bulky protective clothing and equipment

Squwincher Tool Box/Solutions

- Training - Heat Illness Prevention
- Facility Assessments
- Heat Illness Prevention Program Development
- Heat Awareness Collateral
- White Papers & Articles on Hydration & Heat Illness Prevention
- Heat Awareness Posters
- Balanced Electrolyte Replacement Products

Sources:

<https://www.foley.com/en/insights/publications/2022/04/the-heat-is-on-osha-natl-emphasis-program-hazards>

<https://www.natlawreview.com/article/osha-launches-national-emphasis-program-to-expand-heat-illness-prevention-campaign>





Kent Precision Foods Group, Inc.
Muscatine, IA 52761
www.squwincher.com
800-654-1920