Summer Of Safety

12 Weeks of **Summer Safety Reminders** for Employers and Their Employees

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For your convenience, we've compiled the 12 Summer of Safety tips we distributed weekly via WorkCare's social media channels from June to September 2023. You will find these health and safety-related topics on pages 1-12.

Visit us at www.workcare.com to learn about all the ways we help employers protect and promote employee health. For occupational health and safety guidance all year long, please contact us:

info@workcare.com; 800-45-6155

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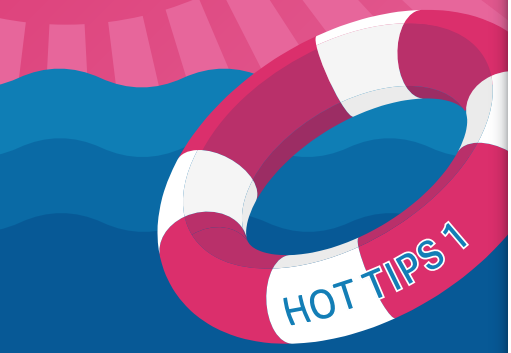

Prepare for High Heat Index Days

> The three primary rules to help prevent heat-related illness when working or recreating outdoors in the summer are water, rest and shade.

Did You Know?

There is a 98 percent likelihood that at least one of the next five years, and the five-year period as a whole, will be the warmest on record, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

Exposure Risk

People who work outdoors or in enclosed environments have higher risk for heat illness on high heat index days. The heat index is a combination of relative humidity and air temperature. For example, on a 90°F day with 70 percent humidity there is higher risk for sunstroke, muscle cramps and heat exhaustion. Full sun exposure can increase the heat index by up to 15°F and create extremely dangerous conditions.

What Can Employers Do?

1. Be familiar with signs and symptoms of heat illness and how to respond in an emergency.
2. Check the daily heat index and adjust work schedules to manage exertion at peak times.
3. Instruct employees to take frequent breaks, stay hydrated and replace minerals lost when sweating.
4. Stock shaded areas or cooling stations with fresh water, ice, wet cloths, fans and misters.
5. Provide UV-ray protection such as sunscreen, light-colored, loose clothing, head covering and sunglasses.
6. Monitor employees who wear personal protective equipment that can increase core temperature.
7. Allow employes to acclimatize over 7-14 days when they are not used to working in hot/humid conditions.
8. Contact WorkCare's subject matter experts to learn about our heat illness prevention programs.

Recommended Resources

Heat-related Illnesses: Response and Prevention, WorkCare Fact Sheet

Heat Safety Tool mobile app (OSHA and NIOSH) uses the heat index as a risk indicator

National Emphasis Program – Outdoor and Indoor Heat-Related Hazards, OSHA 2022

NIOSH Criteria for a Recommended Standard: Occupational Exposure to Heat and Hot Environments

Simplifying Heat Stress Prevention, WorkCare blog by John Longphre, M.D., M.P.H.

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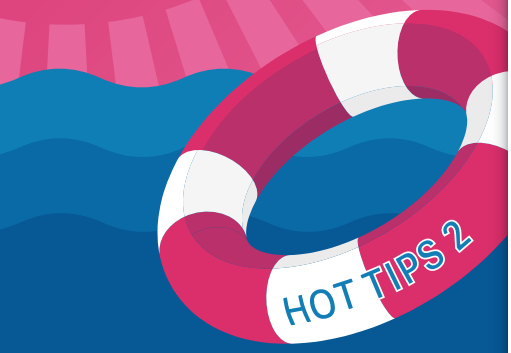

Protect and Inspect Skin to Prevent Cancer

> More people are diagnosed with preventable skin cancer each year in the U.S. than all other types of cancer combined, with the vast majority of cases associated with sun exposure.

Did You Know?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) indirectly addresses work-related exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays under its personal protective equipment standard (29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910.132(a)) relative to radiological hazards. However, unlike some other types of personal protection, OSHA doesn't require employers to pay for UV protection.

What Can Employers Do?

1. Have UV-protection items such as sunscreen available along with water, ice, wet cloths and soothing gels in shaded rest areas or cooling stations.
2. Encourage employees to:
   - Apply broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen (30 SPF or higher) daily, even when it's cloudy, and re-apply it every few hours when sweating.
   - Wear clothing with UV-protection labels, UV-blocking eyewear, protective lip balm, and a wide-brimmed hat or hard hat with a visor and ear and neck coverings.
   - Avoid exposure to direct sunlight during the hottest parts of the day, as feasible. Sun exposure burns skin, affects the body's ability to cool down and contributes to dehydration.
   - Examine skin for abnormalities and get a medical check-up if they have skin cancer risk factors or notice discoloration or suspicious growths.
   - Be aware that certain factors increase cancer risk, including fair skin, indoor tanning, repeated sunburns, family history and exposure to certain chemicals.

Recommended Resources

Does a High SPF Protect My Skin Better? (Skin Cancer Foundation blog post)

OSHA Launches Heat-related National Emphasis Program (WorkCare news brief)

Protect Yourself from Skin Cancer with a Complete Approach (Skin Cancer Foundation)

Protecting Yourself from Sun Exposure (NIOSH Fast Facts)

Skin Cancer Prevention (CDC)

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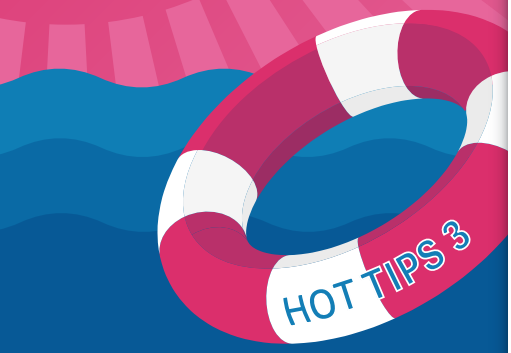

Keeping Fireworks Safety Top of Mind

> Do not use fireworks that are meant for professional displays. They are usually packaged in brown paper. Leave it to the experts, sit back and enjoy the show.

Did You Know?

There are important reasons why consumers are urged to purchase "safe-and-sane" fireworks. In a study, about 30 percent of fireworks tested by the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission were found to be non-compliant due to faulty fuses, use of prohibited chemicals or pyrotechnic materials overload. Even hand-held sparklers are not "harmless." Burning at up to 2,000°F, they can melt some metals, ignite clothing and scorch bare feet if they are dropped.

Most fireworks-related injuries are to the hands, fingers or eyes. Fires are a related hazard. Firecrackers and other types of fireworks reportedly caused an estimated 12,264 fires and $59 million in property damage in 2021.

What Can Employers Do?

Demonstrate that you care about employee safety by sharing this information:

1. If purchasing fireworks, be selective about what you buy. Follow the instructions.
2. Light one at a time in a clear, outdoor space. Never light fireworks in a container or indoors.
3. Wear eye protection and keep water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that are not spent.
4. Instead of sparklers, give kids safer options such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or streamers.
5. Do not use fireworks while under the influence of substances that impair judgment.
6. Remember that you may be held liable in case of a fireworks-related incident on your property.
7. Keep pets indoors; make sure they have an ID tag or microchip in case they get scared and run away.

In case of an injury:

8. Use first-aid remedies to treat mild burns. Seek immediate emergency medical care for severe burns and hand injuries. For eye injuries, do not apply ointment or attempt to remove foreign objects from the eye before seeking emergency care.

Recommended Resources

Fireworks – Celebrate Safely, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Fireworks – Public Education, National Fire Protection Association

Pyrotechnics Industry, OSHA

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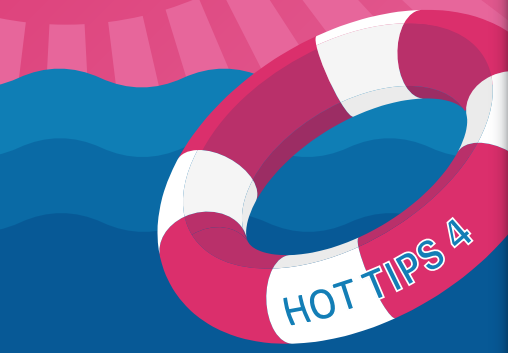

Be Wise In and Around Water

> Swimming on a warm summer day holds the possibility of new, fun experiences. All you need to add is your undivided attention.

Did You Know?

A person can drown in the time it takes to reply to a text, check a fishing line or apply sunscreen. An average of 4,000 people die of drowning each year in the U.S. Drowning is the leading cause of death for children under 14. Men account for nearly 80 percent of adult drowning fatalities. Risk factors for men include more exposure to water than women, risk-taking behaviors and alcohol use. Non-fatal drowning incidents can cause brain damage that impairs function, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Water quality affects health. Recreational water illnesses are caused by exposure to bacteria, other organisms and chemicals that may be swallowed, absorbed through the skin, or inhaled as mists, aerosols or gases.

What Can Employers Do?

Employers can require employees who work on or near water to pass a swimming test and provide training on proper use of personal protective equipment and water-rescue techniques. In general, all employees should be encouraged to follow these tips:

1. Follow boating, skiing, rafting, canoeing and kayaking safety rules; everyone should wear a life vest.
2. Beware of submerged hazards, rip tides, swift currents, murky water and cold temperatures.
3. Wrap up to warm up; the body continues to cool for 20-30 minutes after swimming in cold water.
4. Wear sun protection, avoid intoxicating substances and know what to do in an emergency.
5. Check on water quality before getting into a spa, swimming pool or water in a natural setting.
6. When swimming, wear eye goggles and earplugs, cover open wounds with a waterproof bandage and rinse off with fresh water after swimming to reduce health risk factors.

Recommended Resources

Drowning Prevention, CDC

Open Water Safety Tips, National Drowning Prevention Alliance

Swimming Safety, American Red Cross

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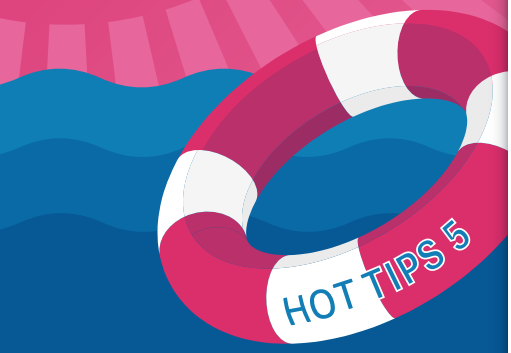

Responding to Insect Bites and Stings

> WorkCare occupational clinicians recommend re-evaluating bites and stings after 24 hours.

Insect bites and stings are a relatively common summertime occurrence in many occupations. Symptoms can range from mild local itchiness to life-threatening systemic reactions.

Did You Know?

People with a history of systemic reactions who are stung around the mouth or throat, or who have been stung multiple times, have a higher risk for severe reactions and should be carefully evaluated by a medical professional. Systemic reactions occur when inflammation caused by toxins, allergies or infection spread from the skin other parts of the body.

Culprits

Bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, spiders, scorpions, fire ants, mosquitoes, lice, ticks, fleas and other insects can inflict bites or stings. Some insects, including mosquitoes, ticks, fleas and flies, can spread diseases such as Lyme, malaria, yellow fever, Zika, dengue or chikungunya.

Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of bite or sting reactions include pain, swelling, itchiness, redness, and burning, numbness or tingling. Systemic bite or sting reactions include:

- Hives
- Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Shortness of breath, wheezing or high-pitched whistling sound
- Generalized swelling, or swelling of the face or throat
- Chest pain, tachycardia, hypotension, low blood pressure
- Dizziness, altered consciousness, fainting

What Can Employers Do?

In an emergency, call 911 or onsite responders. Trained personnel may administer CPR, an EpiPen® and/or Benadryl®. In non-emergency situations, employees at workplaces that use WorkCare's Incident Intervention program or have an onsite clinic can get guidance on the use of ice and elevation of the affected area and over-the-counter remedies such as non-prescription antibiotic ointment or hydrocortisone cream, analgesics to reduce pain and inflammation, and antihistamines for itchiness.

Prevention

Recommended preventive measures include wearing insect repellant containing DEET; keeping exposed skin covered, and not provoking insects, wearing perfumes or brightly colored clothing, or eating outdoors when bugs are active. People with systemic insect allergies should carry a prescribed EpiPen and wear a Medic Alert-type bracelet or neck chain.

Recommended Resources

America's Poison Centers 24/7 helpline: 1-800-222-1222

Avoiding and Treating Work-related Insect Bites and Stings, WorkCare Fact Sheet

Insects and Scorpions, CDC and NIOSH

Protecting Yourself from Stinging Insects, NIOSH Fast Facts

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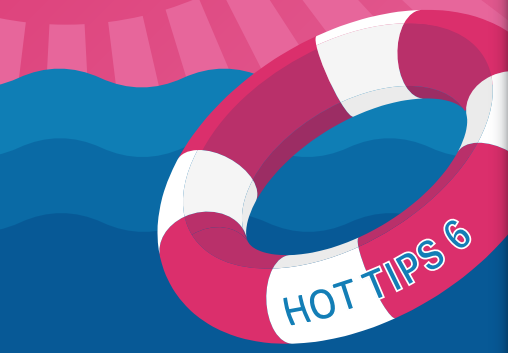

Avoiding Exposure to Poisonous Plants

> Risk of exposure to poisonous plants increases when spending time outdoors during the summer.

Risk of exposure to poisonous plants increases when spending time outdoors during the summer. Poisonous plants contain irritants, toxins or allergenic compounds that can cause reactions such as rashes, eye irritation or respiratory distress. Plant recognition is a critical exposure prevention measure.

Did You Know?

- Types of toxins contained in poisonous plants include alkaloids, glycosides, resins and tannins.
- About 90 percent of the U.S. population is allergic to urushiol sap oil in poison ivy, oak and sumac. Just a tiny bit can cause a rash.
- The fluid in blisters that form with a plant-related rash is not contagious.

What Can Employers Do?

A poisonous plant can easily be mistaken as a harmless one. It's important to teach employees how to identify and avoid poisonous plants in their local area in all seasons. When exposure can't be avoided, workers should be educated about prevention measures. Here are some related tips:

1. Be prepared to respond to signs of a severe allergic reaction that requires an emergency response. Symptoms include coughing, trouble breathing, chest pain, severe sweating, confusion, nausea, vomiting and hives.
2. Get immediate care for swelling and rash on the face or genitals, if you have had a severe reaction in the past, or if you have difficulty breathing.
3. Wear a long-sleeved shirt, pants, boots, head protection and gloves.
4. Do not burn plants or brush piles that may contain poisonous plants.
5. When exposed to smoke, wear a NIOSH-certified half-face piece particulate respirator rated R95, P95 or better per OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134.
6. If you think you've been exposed:
   - Clean your skin with rubbing alcohol, skin cleanser, or soap and cold water
   - Scrub under your fingernails with a brush
   - Wash your outdoor clothing separately
   - Clean tools with rubbing alcohol or soap and water
7. For a rash:
   - Resist scratching; it can cause an infection
   - Apply a wet compress, calamine lotion or hydrocortisone cream
   - If you take an antihistamine, make sure it won't make you drowsy

Recommended Resources

Poisonous Plants: Exposure Avoidance and Response, WorkCare Fact Sheet

Poisonous Plants: Recommendations, NIOSH

Poison Ivy, Oak and Sumac Rash Prevention, American Academy of Dermatology

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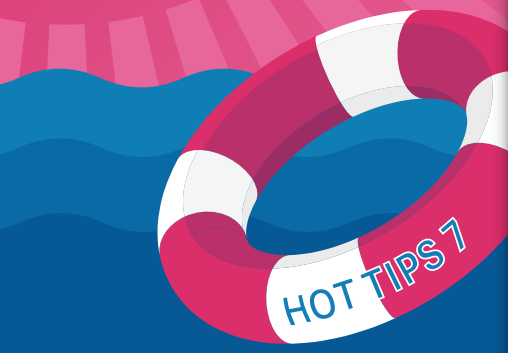

Hydration: A Critical Health & Safety Practice

> Drinking water is an easy, economical way for employees to reduce risk of heat illness, accidents and injuries, and improve their overall health.

Dehydration can silently diminish physical and mental performance. Since the body cannot store water for long, it needs fresh, daily supplies.

Did You Know?

- The brain is about 73% water; a 2% loss of water by sweating can affect brain function.
- Evaporated sweat on the skin helps cool the body off but can cause dehydration.
- Studies show even mild dehydration reduces cognitive ability and physical coordination.

What Can Employers Do?

Promote hydration and its benefits. Water supports blood flow and temperature regulation; improves brain, kidney, liver and urinary functions; aids with digestion; increases energy levels; promotes weight loss; eases joint pain and headaches; improves sleep; and replenishes skin and hair.

Advise employees to:

1. Carry a water bottle and use it at work, while driving, exercising or being outside.
2. Frequently sip water throughout the workday, even when not feeling thirsty.
3. Remember the formula 8 by 8: drink 8 ounces of water 8 times a day.
4. Drink a glass of water when you wake up to get a head start on the day.
5. After strenuous physical activity and sweating, drink water to help your body recover.
6. Know dehydration signs: thirst, dark or little urine, poor appetite, dry mouth and eyes, mild constipation, lethargy, lightheadedness, confusion.
7. Eat fruits and vegetables that contain water and add juice, berries, citrus or cucumbers to water.
8. Avoid dehydrating, sugary drinks and beverages containing coffee or alcohol.
9. If sodium depletion is a problem, drink a beverage containing salt and electrolytes.
10. Avoid over-hydration. Drinking too much too quickly can dilute sodium in the blood and affect essential water control functions at a cellular level.

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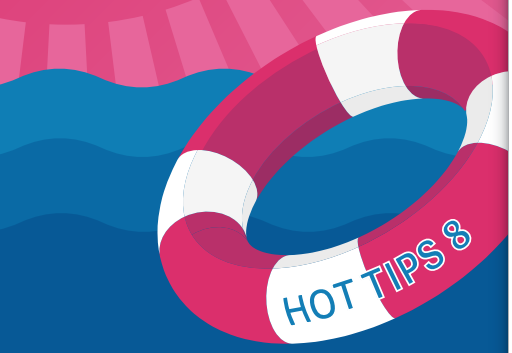

Don't Take Chances in an Electrical Storm

> Lightning has more than one ground contact up to 50 percent of the time; only 3 to 5 percent of injuries are caused by a direct strike.

A summertime electrical storm is exciting to watch – from a safe distance. About 90 percent of lightning-strike victims survive, but many of them have lingering effects such as chronic pain, numbness, dizziness, muscle spasms, depression and memory loss.

Did You Know?

- Water in the body acts as a conductor for lightning when it seeks a path to the ground.
- An electrical charge can pass through wires, pipes, metal and powered live equipment.
- While lightning is considered an outdoor hazard, about a third of strikes occur indoors.
- In the U.S., the odds of being hit by lightning in an 80-year lifetime are about 1 in 15,300.

What Can Employers Do?

Awareness of thunderstorm behavior and taking steps to avoid exposure are keys to preventing injury from a lightning strike. Flashes on the horizon without thunder are a warning sign; lightning may strike up to 10 miles away from any rainfall. Advise your employees to take these precautions:

1. Keep an eye on changing weather conditions, especially in the afternoon.
2. Follow the 30-30 rule: When you see lightning, count to 30. If you hear thunder before you reach 30, seek shelter and stay there until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.
3. During a thunderstorm:
   - Seek shelter in an enclosed building or vehicle.
   - Do not touch metal, wet objects or live electrical equipment.
   - Avoid carrying water or being on or near water.
   - Follow safety procedures for shutting down heavy equipment.
   - If you are caught outside, do not lie down. Keep your feet moving.
   - If you feel a tingling sensation on your hair or skin, squat with your arms around your legs.
4. Separate groups of people to reduce risk of exposure to ground currents and side flashes.
5. In the event someone is hit by lightning:
   - Call emergency responders. If the person is unconscious, follow 911 directions for resuscitation.
   - Move the person to a safe location unless they are bleeding or appear to have broken bones.
   - Put a protective layer between the victim and the ground to decrease hypothermia risk.

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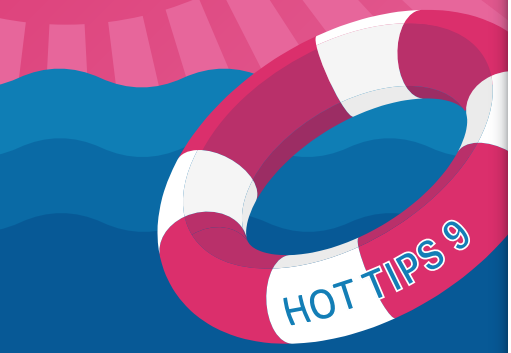

When and How to Use First Aid

> Do not attempt to self-treat profuse bleeding, wounds with skin flaps, gaping or jagged edges, cuts that are long and/or deep, or deeply embedded objects. See a medical professional if you have signs of infection such as hot to the touch, redness, swelling, pain or drainage.

Most minor injuries and physical discomfort can be safely and effectively managed with self-care using first-aid and over-the-counter remedies.

Did You Know?

- A scrape, or abrasion, removes the top protective layer of skin (epidermis).
- A first-degree burn with reddened skin and some pain is usually superficial.
- Most low back pain is short term and tends to resolve on its own with self-care.

What Can Employers Do?

Be prepared to give employees instructions on first-aid remedies. WorkCare Incident Intervention clients can call our 24/7telehealth triage team for care guidance. Here are some self-care tips:

Scrapes and Cuts

1. Apply firm pressure to the wound; you may need to elevate the injured area.
2. Cleanse with antibacterial soap or solution and rinse thoroughly in tepid tap water.
3. Apply non-prescription anti-bacterial ointment to help prevent infection.
4. Cover with a non-sticky, dry, sterile bandage. Close a superficial cut with steri-strips.
5. Keep the wound clean and dry. Change the dressing at least daily.

Puncture Wounds

1. Follow instructions for cleansing and sterile dressing.
2. Remove superficial splinters with sterilized tweezers or a needle.
3. If you can't easily remove an embedded object, apply antibiotic ointment and try again in 24 hours.

Superficial Burns

1. Wash gently with antiseptic or cleanser; dry thoroughly.
2. Apply cold compresses to the affected area.
3. Cover with a dry, sterile dressing.
4. Take an over-the-counter medication for pain at non-prescription strength.
5. Leave blisters intact; apply anti-bacterial ointment and bulky gauze dressing.

Skin Rashes

1. If exposed to an irritant or allergen, wash thoroughly.
2. Use a non-prescription, non-drowsy antihistamine and over-the counter cream or ointment.
3. For heat rash and skin rubbing on skin, bathe in cool water, wear loose-fitting, light-weight cotton clothing, and use body powder or a barrier cream.
4. If the rash is caused by a fungus, apply non-prescription antifungal cream, lotion or powder.

Low Back Pain and Sciatica

1. Take an over-the-counter analgesic and/or a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication as directed at non-prescription strength to help relieve symptoms.
2. Apply an ice pack for 15 to 20 minutes three times per day. Alternating ice with a warm compress may be advisable. After 72 hours a hot soak or shower may provide relief.
3. Keep moving by frequently changing position, walking and stretching.

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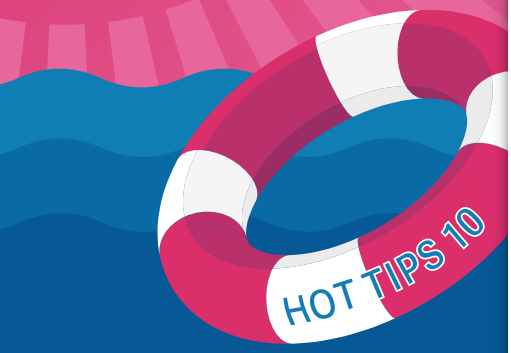

Stay Cool While Conserving Energy

> Mindful energy conservation when using air conditioning during a heat wave provides relief, reduces power demands and lowers electricity bills.

Lack of air-conditioned indoor environments, especially on extremely hot days, is a serious public health risk. Increasing demand for air conditioning (AC) in response to rising temperatures requires thoughtful energy conservation measures.

Did You Know?

- OSHA recommends an indoor workplace temperature range of 68-76°F to maximize employee comfort and productivity. ASHRAE Standard 55, Thermal Conditions for Human Occupancy, recommends 67-82°F.
- About 70 percent of U.S. homes have central air conditioning; lower-income households and rental units are less likely to have any source of AC (Source: Brookings).
- The amount of electricity used for AC depends on the source. For example, a 5000 BTU (window) air conditioner that runs eight hours a day uses an average of 60 to 100 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month, while a 360000 VTU (3 ton) central AC uses 360 to 650 kWh of energy per month (Source: Renewablewise). By comparison, an LED light bulb that is on for two hours a day uses about 0.61 kWh per month.

What Can Employers Do?

Here are some tips from the U.S. Department of Energy that can be shared with employees to help them stay cool while conserving energy:

1. Select an AC with an Energy Star label to fit the space; a unit that's too big is less efficient.
2. Set the thermostat as high as comfortably possible and use humidity control, as needed.
3. Program the thermostat based on occupancy; don't start AC on an extremely low setting.
4. Avoid putting a TV or lamp near the thermostat; emitted heat can trigger a response.
5. Reduce sun exposure with window coverings, outdoor umbrellas or awnings, and shade trees.
6. Keep places where you live and work warmer than usual when no one is there.
7. Turn off the ceiling fan when not in a room; the wind-chill effect cools people, not things.
8. Vent bathroom and laundry room fans to the outside to dispel heat and humidity.
9. Turn off the AC and open windows to allow air flow during cooler parts of the day.
10. Keep AC air filters clean and do routine maintenance on structures to prevent hot-air leaks.

Recommended Resources

- Keeping cool in a hotter world is using more energy, making efficiency more important than ever, International Energy Agency commentary
- Simple ways to save this summer, PG&E
- Ventilation Management (HVAC), NIOSH

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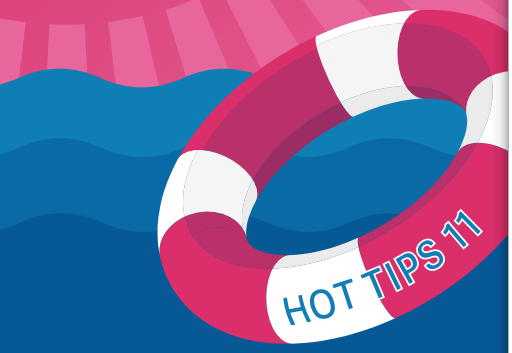

Make an Investment in Good Digestion

> A Labor Day weekend menu that emphasizes fresh foods such as fruits and vegetables is nutritious and refreshing, especially on hot, humid days.

Over Labor Day weekend there are opportunities to share meals outdoors with friends and family members. It's easy to overlook foodborne illness risks that can ruin a good time.

Did You Know?

- Foodborne illness occurs when you consume food or beverages containing toxins, bacteria, viruses or parasites.
- Food becomes contaminated by improper temperatures, dirty utensils/equipment, preparers with poor health/hygiene and unsafe sources.
- Symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramps, fever and chills usually resolve on their own, but they can become serious.

What Can Employers Do?

Pass along these tips to your workforce before the Labor Day weekend to help prevent foodborne illnesses that can result in lost workdays.

Food preparation:

1. Don't prepare food for others if you or a family member are ill.
2. Don't share utensils with others or taste-test with your fingers.
3. Frequently wash surfaces and hands with warm water and soap.
4. Wash fresh produce in clean, running water before preparing it.
5. Separate raw meats and fish from other ingredients while prepping.
6. Transfer foods from prep surfaces/platters to clean serving dishes.

Food preservation:

1. Store cold foods at 40°F or lower and hot foods at 140°F or higher.
2. Discard food after two hours when it has been in the "danger zone" (40-140°F).
3. Cook food at recommended temperatures; use a thermometer.
4. When transporting food, carry it in insulated coolers or warmers.
5. Immediately refrigerate leftovers in sealed containers.

Medical care is recommended for a fever higher than 101.5°F, blood in stool, prolonged vomiting, severe dehydration or diarrhea that lasts more than three days. To replace vital fluids and salts, take sips of water throughout the day and replenish lost electrolytes with a sports drink.

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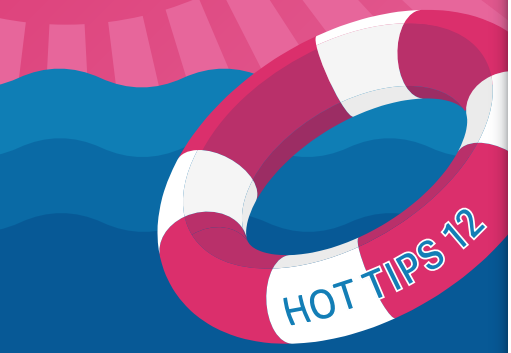

Flu Season on the Horizon

> Flu vaccination prevented an estimated 1.8 million illnesses, 1 million medical visits, 22,000 hospitalizations and nearly 1,000 deaths in a single U.S. season. (Source: CDC)

In the U.S., annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. The community (herd) immunity created by widespread vaccination helps reduce illness rates for everyone, including vulnerable groups such as people over 65, children under 5, and anyone with a weak immune system and/or chronic illness.

Did You Know?

- September and October are optimal months for vaccination, but anytime during the flu season helps reduce the spread of disease.
- The 2023-24 vaccine formula targets four predominant strains; although any type of vaccine is not 100 percent effective, it can reduce illness severity.
- Pneumonia, ear and sinus infections, and worsening of medical conditions such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes are examples of flu-related complications.

What Can Employers Do?

Employers can encourage employees to get their flu shot by providing them onsite or facilitating access at local medical facilities and drug stores. WorkCare can assist clients with planning and delivery. Here is some information to share with employees:

1. Flu vaccines cause protective antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination.
2. The 2023-24 vaccine will protect against influenza A(H1N1), influenza A(H3N2), and two influenza B viruses.
3. Some licensed vaccines are not recommended for some groups of people. If you are unsure, ask a medical professional for guidance.
4. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends specific flu vaccines for people over 65 – Fluzone high-dose, Flublok recombinant and Fluad adjuvanted – because they are potentially more effective than standard-dose inactivated influenza, recombinant influenza or live attenuated influenza vaccines recommended for people under age 65.
5. Most flu vaccines are produced using an egg-based manufacturing process. This year, people with egg allergies are advised that it's safe to receive either an egg-based or non-egg-based vaccine approved for their age and health status.
6. It has been shown to be safe to get vaccinated against the flu and COVID-19 at the same time; a combination vaccine is not available for the 2023-24 season.

Recommended Resources

Influenza general information and weekly updates (CDC)

WorkCare 2023-24 Flu Season Fact Sheet

WorkCare™ WORK MATTERS. HEALTH COUNTS.