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California Cooling Down

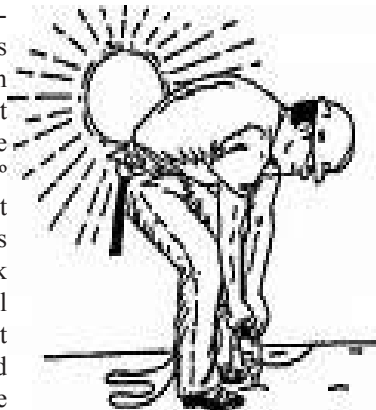
California experienced over 11 days of 100° or above temperatures this July. In some regions of the Central Valley, temperatures reached as high as 115°. Statewide, Californians watched news reports listing the mounting deaths and news of blackouts and threatened blackouts caused by the statewide heat wave.

The state Office of Emergency Services announced on July 28, that there have been 126 confirmed or presumed deaths due to the heat in 21 counties. Most of the counties affected have been Central Valley counties with Fresno County's 25 deaths being the largest. Deaths as of July 31 for California counties are: Stanislaus (22), Sacramento (13), Kern (11), San Joaquin and San Bernardino (10 each), Imperial (6) and Riverside and Alameda (2 each). Yolo, Madera, Marin and Sonoma Counties have each had one death during this current heat wave.

Extreme heat is defined as continued temperatures 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region. The condition lasts for a prolonged length of time and is often accompanied by high humidity that the body cannot tolerate. In direct sunlight, the heat index can be a full 15° hotter than surrounding ambient temperatures. Evaporation is slowed and the body must work harder to maintain a normal temperature. There is significant rise in documented heat-related illness cases when excessive heat persists more than two days.

Heat Illness is a medical condition that results from the body's inability to cope with heat and cool itself. Often, the first signals that the body is having trouble with heat are muscular pain and spasms due to heavy exertion. To treat heat cramps, move the victim to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Lightly stretch or massage the affected muscle and replenish fluids. Encourage the victim to drink four ounces of water every 15 minutes.

Heat exhaustion occurs when blood flow to the skin increases, pulling blood away from vital organs. Mild shock results that,



if left untreated, can lead to an increase in body temperature and eventually can become heat stroke. The signals of heat exhaustion are cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperatures may be normal or rising. To treat heat exhaustion, move the victim to a cooler place. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths to the skin. If the person is conscious, give four ounces of water to drink every 15 minutes. Rest the victim in a comfortable position and watch for any changes in his or her condition.

Heat stroke occurs when a victim's cooling system no longer works. Body temperature can rise so high that brain damage may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Signals of heat stroke are hot, red skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperatures can be as high as 105°. To treat heat stroke, call 9-1-1 or local emergency services immediately. Move the victim to a cooler place and quickly cool the body by submerging in cool water or with wet cloths and fan the body. Watch for respiratory problems and keep the person lying down. Encourage victims to take in four ounces of cool water every 15 minutes. If the victim refuses water, is vomiting, or changes in consciousness, do not give anything to eat or drink.

At least four California workers died due to heat illness in July. The first victim, 38 year-old, Joaquin Ramirez died on July 19. Ramirez had only been working for Raul Hidalgo Lawn Services for three days when he collapsed while loading grass clippings onto a truck in 104° temperatures. The next day, 49 year-old Benadino Gomez, a Valley Pool and Plastering worker died in Kerman. He had been laboring in 109° temperatures on July 20.

On July 24 in Santa Rosa, passersby found 67 year-old pizza delivery driver, Alfonso Gutierrez, unconscious in his vehicle. He died later that evening. The temperatures in Santa Rosa that day peaked at 100°-a full 18 degrees hotter than the region's normal average of 82°. The fourth official heat-related workplace fatality was a Madera county agricultural worker on July 25. The 38 year-old Stamoules Produce employee collapsed while packing corn in 111° heat.

California's Heat Illness standard is the first permanent safety and health regulation for the prevention of heat illness in the country. The process has been a long and arduous task that began with a petition from a group of Los Angeles librarians in the mid 1980s. Interest in Heat Illness returned in August of 2005, when Governor Schwarzenegger called for an emergency regulation in response to 13 work-related deaths and 12 heat illness reports.

This current standard covers all outdoor workers. The Division of Occupational Safety and Health is immediately calling to restart advisory committee talks to expand the standard to all places of employment.

Victoria Bradshaw, Labor and Workforce Development Agency Secretary stated in Division of Industrial Relations press releases "We are fully committed to vigorously pursuing investigation of violation of the ...heat illness prevention regulations through the state. If we find that there were violations of these regulations, we will use every means at our disposal to hold those responsible accountable." During ...extraordinary heat wave(s), we cannot operate as if it's business as usual." Bradshaw urges both employers and employees to take preventative measures. California's Interim Chief of Occupational Safety and Health, Len Welsh stated, "Prevention is the best defense against heat-related illnesses. Once a worker actually becomes ill from the effects of heat, it can be too late."

On June 15, the California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board approved a permanent version of the standard. On July 27, the Office of Administrative Law voted for the permanent standard to immediately replace the emergency standard.

The current standard states that all employers must provide training, adequate potable water, constantly accessible shade and must have written procedures for adhering to the standard.

For more information about heat-related illness and the new Heat Illness Prevention Standard, look on the Division of Industrial Relations website, www.dir.ca.gov or you may call Safety Center at (800) 825-7262 x 218 for tailgate training packets, heat/sun kits and other information. §

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Welcome New Members!

B & B Surplus

Bennett Development

ASSE/CSOOC/PASMA Professional Development Conference October 10-13, 2006

The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), the County Safety Officers Organization of California (CSOOC) and the Public Agency Safety Mangers Association (PASMA) invite you to participate in their "Safety-A Capitol Idea" Professional Development Conference October 10-13, 2006. The event will be held at the Radisson Hotel in Sacramento, California.

Safety involves a complex mix of disciplines. Conference organizers hope attendees will expand their circles of knowledge, resources and contacts to bring exciting possibilities and solutions to others in the field of safety.

For more information or to register, you may visit www.pasmaonline.org, www.csooc.org or the Sacramento Chapter of the ASSE, www.sacramento.asse.org. Register early, as space is limited.

Open Enrollment Courses September, October & November 2006

September

- 11-14 Forklift Instructor 4-Day
- 12 How to Comply with OSHA Recordkeeping
- 13 How to Conduct Safety Inspections
- 14 How to Conduct Accident Investigations
- 15 Rough Terrain Forklift Instructor
- 18-19 Forklift Instructor 2-Day (S.CA)
- 19 How to Apply Different Leadership Styles to Improve Safety & Health
- 19-21 Cal/OSHA-8 Train the Trainer
- 20 Instructor Re-certification (S.CA)
- 20 How to Partner for Improved Safety & Health Results
- 21 How to Increase Safety & Health's Bottom Line
- 21 Competent Person Excavation
- 22 Competent Person Fall Protection
- 26 Cal/OSHA-8 Residential
- 28 Cal/OSHA-8 Commercial
- 29 DDC-4

October

- 2-6 Loader Family Instructor
- 4 Rapid Eye Check
- 10-13 CPR/AED/First Aid Instructor
- 16-17 Forklift Instructor 2-Day Express
- 17-19 Cal/OSHA-8 Train the Trainer (S.CA)
- 18 CPR/FA

- 20 Competent Person Excavation
- 23-26 Forklift Instructor 4-Day (S.CA)
- 24-26 Confined Space Entry/Rescue
- 24-26 How to Conduct Training Programs & Presentations
- 27 DDC-4
- 31 Cal/OSHA-8 Residential

November

- 6-9 Aerial Lift Instructor
- 9 Competent Person Excavation
- 14 How to Establish a Successful Safety Program
- 15 How to Control Hazards in the Workplace
- 16 How to Sell Safety
- 16 Confined Space Awareness
- 17 Safety Management (For Managers and Supervisors)
- 17 DDC-4
- 21 Cal/OSHA-8 Residential
- 28-29 Forklift Instructor 2-Day Express
- 30 Instructor Re-certification

Please visit our website: www.safetycenter.org for updates and course descriptions. §