

Dear valued partner,

The heat wave is expanding across the US for one of the hottest summers on record. The American GFS model is expanding the ridge of high pressure, known as a “heat dome”, across the Lower 48 states.

Rockwood Casualty emailed Heat Stress safety information in June but since the temperatures are going up, we wanted to emphasize Heat Stress again.



WHY HEAT STRESS IS SO IMPORTANT

OSHA’s National Emphasis Program on Warehousing can also include a Heat Stress component.

According to the July 24, 2023 *Safety Alert for Supervisors* Article, “Inspectors Told to Cite Employers Exposing Workers to High Heat.”

Brace for more scrutiny of the steps you’re taking to safeguard your crew members from the heat. That’s your takeaway from a recently announced national emphasis Program (NEP) from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration that targets enforcement efforts at warehousing operations, distribution centers, mail processing facilities and certain retail operations. In addition to checking for forklift truck and other warehouse-related risks, the NEP calls for inspectors to look for heat-related hazards by talking to crew members, examining injury records and walking through the facility. Employers that aren’t protecting staffers from the high heat will be hit with safety citations.

President Joe Biden is directing OSHA to “ramp up” enforcement to protect workers from extreme heat and to issue a hazard alert. [See this article from National Safety Council.](#)

Employers are Responsible for Protecting Workers from Heat Illness

By law employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards, including extreme heat.

It is your responsibility to:

- Provide workers with water, rest and shade.
- Allow new or returning workers to gradually increase workloads and take more frequent breaks during the first week of work as they build a tolerance for working in the heat.
- Plan for emergencies and train workers on prevention.
- Monitor workers for signs of illness.

[osha.gov/heat](https://www.osha.gov/heat)



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SAFETY TIPS FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS:

Heat-Related Illnesses and First Aid



Several heat-related illnesses can affect workers. Some of the symptoms are non-specific. This means that when a worker is performing physical labor in a warm environment, any unusual symptom can be a sign of overheating.

Heat-Related Illness	Symptoms and Signs
Heat stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Confusion▪ Slurred speech▪ Unconsciousness▪ Seizures▪ Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin▪ Very high body temperature▪ Rapid heart rate
Heat exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fatigue▪ Irritability▪ Thirst▪ Nausea or vomiting▪ Dizziness or lightheadedness▪ Heavy sweating▪ Elevated body temperature or fast heart rate
Heat cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Muscle spasms or pain▪ Usually in legs, arms, or trunk
Heat syncope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fainting▪ Dizziness
Heat rash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Clusters of red bumps on skin▪ Often appears on neck, upper chest, and skin folds

Rhabdomyolysis (muscle breakdown)

- Muscle pain
- Dark urine or reduced urine output
- Weakness

Employers and workers should become familiar with the heat symptoms. When any of these symptoms is present, promptly provide first aid. Do not try to diagnose which illness is occurring. Diagnosis is often difficult because symptoms of multiple heat-related illnesses can occur together. Time is of the essence. These conditions can worsen quickly and result in fatalities.

When in doubt, cool the worker and call 911.

See below for further first aid recommendations.

First Aid



OSHA's [Medical Services and First Aid standard](#) and the [Medical Service and First Aid in Construction](#) require the ready availability of first aid personnel and equipment. First aid for heat-related illness involves the following principles:

- Take the affected worker to a cooler area (e.g., shade or air conditioning).
- Cool the worker immediately. Use active cooling techniques such as:
 - Immerse the worker in cold water or an ice bath. Create the ice bath by placing all of the available ice into a large container with water, standard practice in sports. **This is the best method to cool workers rapidly in an emergency.**
 - Remove outer layers of clothing, especially heavy protective clothing.
 - Place ice or cold wet towels on the head, neck, trunk, armpits, and groin.
 - Use fans to circulate air around the worker.
- Never leave a worker with heat-related illness alone. The illness can rapidly become worse. Stay with the worker.
- When in doubt, call 911!

Confusion, slurred speech, or unconsciousness are signs of heat stroke. **When these types of symptoms are present, call 911 immediately and cool the worker with ice or cold water until help arrives.**

Workers who are new to working in warm environments are at increased risk of heat-related illness. See the [Protecting New Workers](#) section of this website for more details. Especially **during a worker's first few days, absolutely all symptoms should be taken seriously. Workers who develop symptoms should be allowed to stop working. They should receive evaluation for possible heat-related illness.**

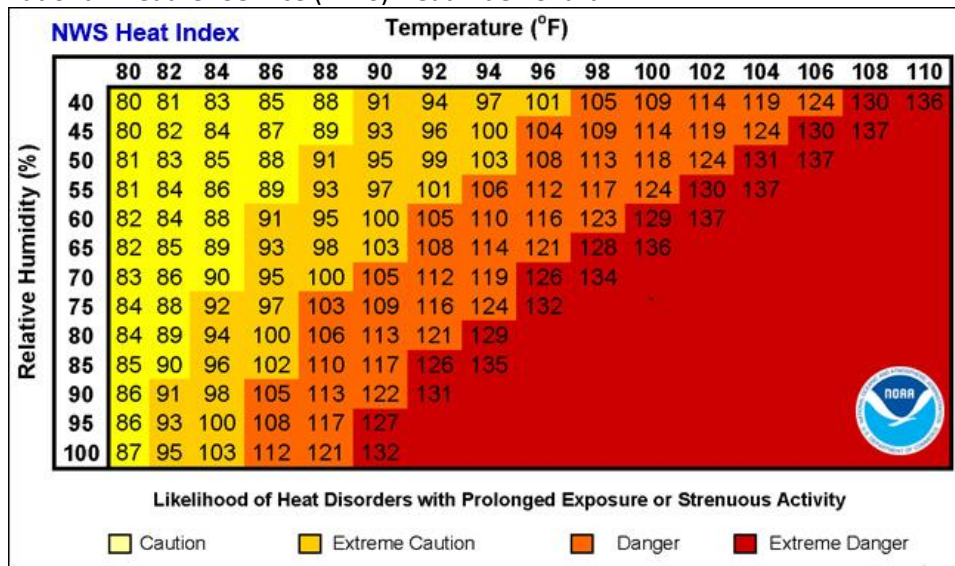
Rockwood Casualty Toolbox Talks:

- [Heat Exhaustion and Stroke](#)
- [Lawn Care](#)
- [Tree Trimming](#)

Streamery Videos: Every Rockwood policy includes access to Streamery, a vast safety library with videos, quizzes and more resources to help you promote safety in your workplace. If you don't have access, contact us to get a username. Enter the SKU number below to find the recommended video.

- **Heat Stress Working Safely in Heat:** 12 min / SKU: 3608 / English
(The viewer will learn to recognize and treat symptoms of: Heat Rash, Heat Cramps, Heat Syncope, Heat Stress and Heat Stroke.)
- **Heat Stress – Real Accident, Real Stories:** 14 min / SKU: 2696 / English
- **Understanding and Preventing Heat-Related Illnesses**
(Concise) 9 min / SKU: 2807 + 2807-S / English & Spanish
(More In-Depth) 17 min / SKU 2806 + 2806-S / English & Spanish

National Weather Service (NWS) Heat Index Chart



OSHA / NIOSH Resources:

- [OSHA Heat Stress Prevention Page](#) – Includes General Education, Employer’s Responsibilities and Worker Information.
- [OSHA Alert: Prevent Heat Illness at Work](#)
- OSHA has resources to help keep workers safe from tree care and landscaping hazards.
 - <https://www.osha.gov/landscaping>
 - <https://www.osha.gov/tree-care>
 - <https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/06122023>
- [OSHA Heat Exposure Page](#)



- Download the NIOSH/OSHA Heat App [[iOS](#) | [Android](#)] to access a simple heat calculator on your device. Remember that the Heat App provides only heat index (HI), not WBGT, although it does also provide workload guidance.

- [NIOSH Heat Prevention Poster](#)
- [NIOSH Heat Stress Risk Factors](#)
- [NIOSH Heat Stress Page](#)

Safety+Health Magazine from National Safety Council:

- [Hydrate for Good Health](#)
- [Work Safely in the Heat: What You Need to Know](#)
- [Tackle Heat Stress Hazards](#)

Injury Facts:

- [Weather-Related Deaths and Injuries](#)

Off-the-Job Resources from National Safety Council: Safety needs to be 24/7. Let the following resources help you and those you care about stay safe around the clock.

- **NEW!** [Stay Safe in the Heat tip sheet](#)
- [What's the UV Index?](#)
- [Help Older Adults Stay Safe in the Heat](#)
- [NSC First Aid App](#) – including information on heat-related illnesses
- [Children are Dying in Hot Cars](#) – including free online training in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)



Questions? Feel free to reach out!

As always, your Rockwood partners are available to answer your questions and help you promote safety in the workplace. Contact Rockwood Loss Control for any support you need.

Thank you for your continued partnership,

Rockwood Loss Control Team
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