

John Meola's Safety First! Safety Meeting Topics for WSA Members



July Safety Info

- Change routine in extreme heat
- Extreme heat relief mechanisms
- More heat cautions and relief methods
- Defensive driving in heat
- Ergonomic effects of high heat
- Heat illness progression warning signs

HEAT INDEX = TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY



- When the index reaches 105 degrees, it is time to make adjustments to your normal routine
- Decrease time spent in direct sun; cover up; use cooling bandana; reconfigure work to avoid hottest time of day
- WIND can help – air movement helps cool
- Fans may help if available
- The body cools itself by perspiration, which removes HEAT as it evaporates
- Important to stay well HYDRATED for this process to work efficiently

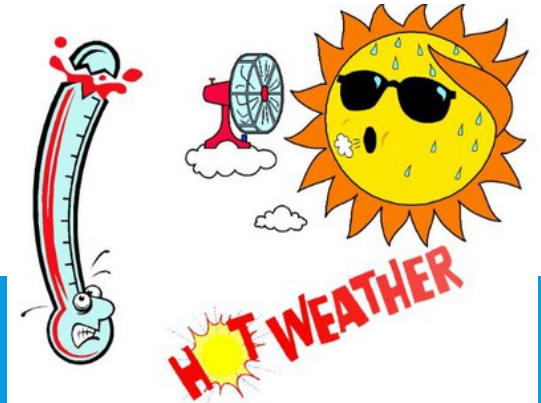
EXTREME HEAT RELIEF MECHANISMS

- Wear light colors to reflect sunlight. Cover exposed skin. Risk is melanoma; etc.
- Open front shirts allow better cooling & ventilation;
- Avoid polyester garments – they trap heat and do not breathe as well
- Light weight cotton, linen or blend is usually best
- Wear loose clothing, upper body and trousers, will allow better air circulation; avoid constricting circulation
- Keep sun off back of NECK – this heats blood flowing to brain, gives you headache. Use bandana or kerchief or high vis nape protector
- Keep cuffs taped in long grass. TICKS will get on you. Use repellent
- Sensitive skin — use SPF, zinc chromate



THE GAME IS CHANGING...

- Long term, we will need to find smarter ways to work in high heat
- Tents, canopies, shelters, sun shades, umbrellas
- Misting fans, air movers
- Vehicles parked in direct sun – use windshield screen on EXTERIOR
- Watch what you TOUCH. For example, a piece of sheet metal, such as a door, can burn you on contact. Pay attention!
- Heat ‘waves’ are lasting longer and are hotter — not to mention the forest and urban fire potential

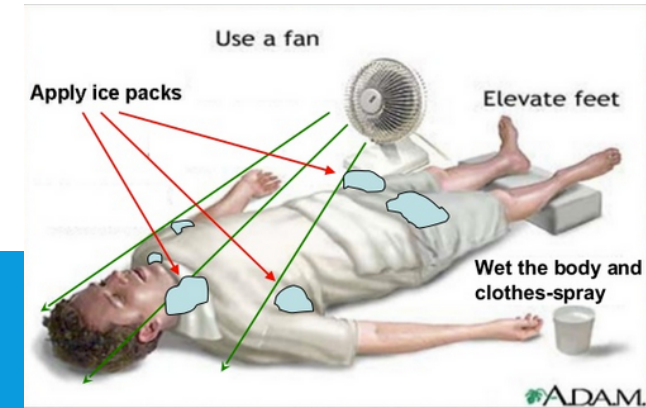


'HOT' DEFENSIVE DRIVING

- Your vehicle is under stress in high temps. Check coolant level.
- Battery & electrical system is weakened by high heat
- TIRE PRESSURES will fluctuate given temperature changes
- GATORS from overloaded semi's will be more prevalent
- The speed rating of truck tires is affected by high road surface temps.
- No one told the truckers about this...Avoid large trucks as much as possible
- Be alert for the indicators that something is about to BLOW UP on the road in front of you!

ERGONOMIC EFFECTS OF HIGH HEAT

- Severe prolonged dehydration — risk of kidney stone formation
- Hydrate with water; NOT ice cold — cool is best.
- Sip gradually, steadily; avoid sugar, soda, Red Bull, etc.
- Eat LIGHT — Hotter = LIGHTER ; salads, watermelon, veggies
- Avoid foods that are fried, preserved, or have a high salt content
- Get proper rest. High heat induces early onset of fatigue



HEAT ILLNESS PROGRESSION – WARNING SIGNS

- Heat tolerance levels will vary by individual and state of health. Most can take moderate heat without adverse effects.

Be alert for:

- Heat Rash
- Heat CRAMPS – usually in legs, buttocks, large muscle mass
- Heat fatigue, exhaustion. Sit in shade, elevate FEET; hydrate, chill
- Heat STROKE: if you ignored all the other signs, this is it.
- Call 911
- Keep an eye on your co-workers.

