



MAFES Dawg Tracks

April 6, 2015



Safety Tips: Prevent Heat Illness & Stress



Well, winter is gone and summer is on its way! Mississippi summers are a “necessary evil” to produce crop growth and provide an attractive atmosphere for recreational activities. The hot, humid Mississippi summers, as important as they are for the above named activities, they can be a “thorn in the side.” We have to take steps to protect ourselves from the various effects of the heat.

HEAT STRESS CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS-

- Working outdoors in hot, humid weather can result in heat stress. This condition will occur when our bodies build up more heat than they can handle.
- Outdoor work, like our agricultural or construction work, where we are exposed to the sun for long periods of time makes us especially vulnerable for heat stress.
- Acute heat stress can be life threatening, requiring immediate medical care.
- Knowing the steps to take if a co-worker shows signs of heat stress can be a great help for them.

FACTORS THAT CAUSE HEAT ILLNESSES-

- ~Temperature ~Humidity
- ~Amount of air movement ~Physical Activity
- ~Radiant temperature of surroundings

RECOGNIZING HEAT ILLNESSES-

Heat illness encompasses a number of different types of which are heat rash, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

- Heat stroke, which occurs suddenly, is the most life-threatening and requires immediate medical attention.
- Heat illness symptoms can vary, but following are some of the most common ones:
 - ~Exhaustion ~Dizziness or fainting
 - ~Headaches ~Aggressive or irrational behavior
 - ~Nausea ~Severe thirst/dry mouth
 - ~Muscle weakness` ~Chills
 - ~Loss of coordination ~ Confusion, including slurred speech
- It is important to stay calm, but act quickly if you think that someone is showing signs of heat stress.

HIGH TEMPERATURE + HIGH HUMIDITY-PHYSICAL ACTIVITY=HEAT ILLNESS

RESPONSES TO HEAT ILLNESSES-

- ✓ Move the victim to a cool or shaded area.
- ✓ Have someone to call for immediate emergency medical help (Make sure that all employees are familiar with the location of the posted emergency medical numbers and the 9-1-1- no. Make sure that you or someone else that is 1st aid/CPR certified can be reached A.S.A.P.

- ✓ Move the victim to a cool or shaded area.
- ✓ Have someone to call for immediate medical help (make sure that all employees know the location of the **posted emergency phone numbers and the 9-1-1 number.** Make sure that you or someone else that is 1st aid/CPR certified **can be reached A.S.A.P.**
- ✓ Remove their outer clothing (jacket, hat, etc.) as well as any personal protective equipment. The jacket or other wet items may restrict the blood flow. If the victim has been spraying pesticides, don't touch the outer clothing as it could be contaminated with the pesticide residue. A good idea so to put on gloves to be extra safe.
- ✓ Cool the victim off. If it is available, use a sponge with cool water to apply to their body and legs. Sponge or splash cool water on the legs, face, neck, hands and forearms.
- ✓ If the victim is conscious and alert, have them to drink as much cool water as possible.
- ✓ Try to keep the victim calm and still until the emergency service personnel arrive.

PROTECT YOURSELF-

- Learn to recognize the symptoms of heat stress and how to treat them.
- On hot days, don't spare the water. Drink often during the day and you might sprinkle some hints of salt or salty foods, but no salt tablets.
- Wear loose clothing made of cotton and other fabrics that allow air to pass through.
- Gauge your work habits and take sufficient breaks.
- In the spring, gradually acclimate yourself to heat so that in the full-bore summer you are more tolerant.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat.
- Avoid drinks that contain, caffeine, alcohol and large amounts of sugar.

DO:

- o **Become familiar with the symptoms of heat illnesses.**
- o **Quickly move the victim to a cool or shaded area.**
- o **Remember to drink a lot of water before, during and after work to help reduce the potential for heat stress.**

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DON'T:

- **Forget to seek emergency medical help when you first suspect a symptom of heat stress.**
- **If the victim has on contaminated clothing from spraying pesticides, don't touch their outer clothing without wearing gloves.**
- **Leave a person alone who may have a heat-related illness.**

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Gemplers.com

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