

Occupational Safety in Hot Weather

Too much exposure to Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Hot weather can also lead to dehydration. Therefore, the sun must be treated as an occupational health risk like any other. Those most at risk are people who work outside for large periods of time e.g. those working in the construction industry, in horticultural and agriculture and other outdoor professions.

UV Rays – What are they?

UV Rays come from the sun and are carcinogenic to humans. Some UV rays can pass through cloud so sun protection is essential, even on cloudy days. We must remember that drivers may also be susceptible to solar UV exposure as not all glass is completely sun proof.

Potential effects of UV Rays on Health

(UV) Radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Skin cancer is now the most common form of cancer in the world. However, with the right precautions, 90% of skin cancer deaths could be prevented so don't forget to wear your sunblock.

Potential effects of Heat on Working Conditions

Increased sunshine and heat can lead to dehydration or can alter our working environment by increasing the temperature of the materials with which we are working. Therefore it is important to assess the risk in our workplace when extreme changes in temperature take place e.g. heatwave conditions

What you should do to protect yourself:

- Cover your skin in a high factor sun block regularly throughout the day (Factor 50 or above);
- Drink plenty of fluids, (one small cup every 15 - 20 minutes) avoiding caffeine and alcohol;
- Avoid eating large meals before working in hot environments;
- Arrange for the heaviest work to be done in the coolest part of the day;
- Plan carefully so that indoor work can be completed in the hottest part of the day;
- Wear your personal protective equipment as recommended;
- Be conscious of those working around you as increased heat can make people tired;
- Check your skin regularly for any unusual spots or moles. If concerned make an appointment to see your GP as soon as possible.

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Name	Signature	Date
What are the health effects of too much sun?		
Name 3 things you can do to protect yourself in the sun?		
1		
2		
3		