



CONN-OSHA Quarterly

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT of LABOR DIVISION of OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY and HEALTH

Heat Related Illnesses

For many people, hot summer days do not mean sipping lemonade while lounging in a lakeside chair or even working in an air-conditioned office. To the field hand picking crops directly under the hot sun or the HVAC mechanic working in a stifling attic, high temperatures are a deadly concern. Each year in America, an average of 33 workers lose their lives to heat illnesses.

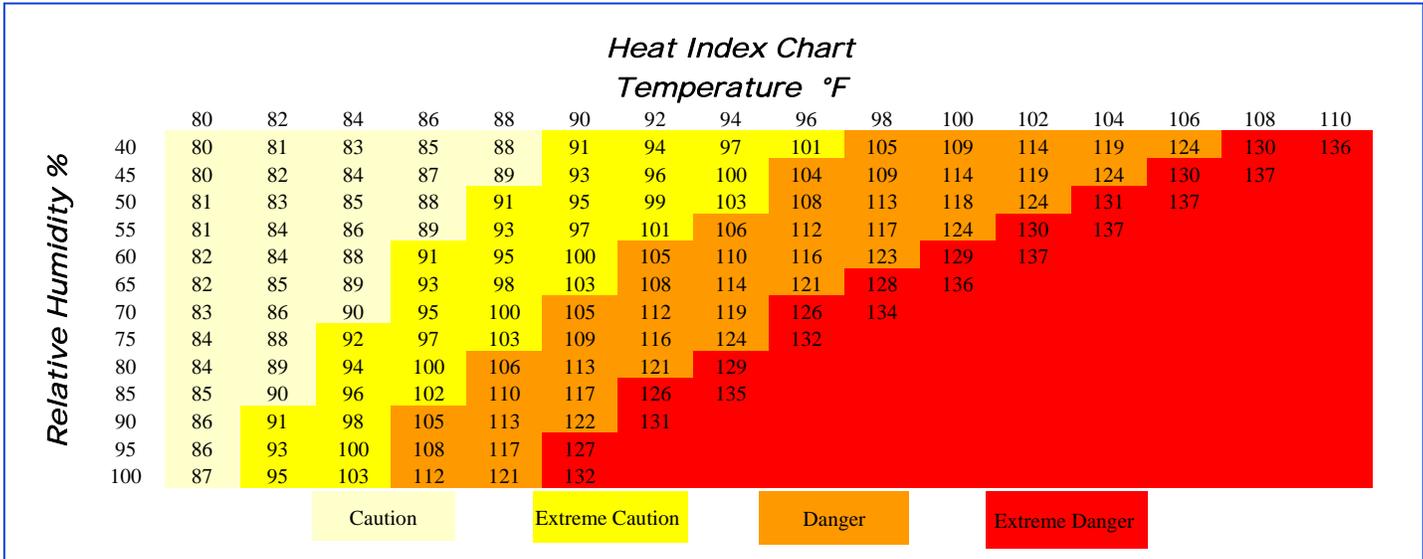
Heat illness is a serious medical condition resulting from the body's inability to cope with heat. Human beings need to maintain their internal body temperature within a very narrow range of a few degrees above or below 98.2° F. The body loses its "heat balance" when it cannot shed heat at a fast enough rate to keep the body cool.

When the body starts to overheat, more blood flows to the outer layers of the skin so the heat can be released into the cooler outside environment. If this process does not cool the body fast enough, or the outside air is warmer than the skin, the brain triggers sweating to cool the body. Sweat draws water from the bloodstream and releases the heat through evaporation. During an hour of heavy work in hot weather, the body can easily sweat one quart of water.

Heat illness can develop very rapidly and is not always obvious before it becomes life-threatening. Heat exhaustion symptoms include heavy sweating, muscle cramps, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, headache, fast and shallow breathing, or a fast and weak pulse. Skin may appear clammy, pale, cool, and moist. Heatstroke symptoms include no sweating (indicating that the body can no longer cool down), mental confusion, convulsions, dizziness, muscle twitching, rapid and weak pulse, or unconsciousness. Skin may be hot and dry, appearing red, bluish or mottled. At this stage, the body temperature may reach 104°F or higher within 10-15 minutes.

If your employees perform physical tasks in un-air-conditioned environments, you should develop written procedures for preventing heat illness. Designate a specific person to monitor the weather before and during the workday using www.noaa.gov. When temperatures are expected to reach 85°F, heat illness procedures should be enacted. Heat illness procedures should be a mixture of monitoring weather conditions, providing adequate water and shade, and employee education. Once temperatures reach 95°F, or a heat spike occurs (an increase of 9 degrees or more in a day), or high humidity occurs, you must be extra vigilant in preventing heat illness.

(Continued on page #2)



Paul Hartmann Retires

In March of 1993, Paul began working for the Connecticut Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Division (CONN-OSHA) consultation department. During his career he served both the public and private sector. Prior to coming to CONN-OSHA, Paul worked for Electric Boat (EB) in Groton. At EB Paul was a welder and safety specialist. He earned a degree in Safety & Health Human Resources Management from the University of New Haven.

Paul currently lives in Griswold with his wife, Dawn, where he was a former member of the town Planning & Zoning Commission. All of us at CONN-OSHA wish Paul the very best in his retirement.

During his years with CONN-OSHA, Paul worked with many people. The following are quotes from some of his clients

“I have never met a person with such great knowledge about industrial settings. He was a great resource of knowledge without looking anything up. He will be one person very hard to replace and I wish him well.”

Tom Robinson
The Norwalk Vault Company

“I have worked with Paul for approximately eleven years. During this time I found Paul to be an extremely knowledgeable and competent OSHA representative. Paul's patience to carefully explain in detail all aspects of a particular hazard benefited not just the employer but the employee as well. Paul instilled in me and others within our Company the need to thoroughly embrace the benefits of safety which has enabled us to achieve SHARP status in both our Connecticut and Massachusetts facilities. Paul's hard work during consultations, follow ups and numerous phone calls has made an everlasting impact on me as well as on this Company and its Safety Culture.”

John E. Dubrowin
Sanford & Hawley, Inc.

“Paul Hartmann has been a consultant with our mill for a number of years. His employment with CONN-OSHA has allowed me not just to work with him but learn some valuable skills from his vast vault of knowledge and traits. I credit Paul entirely for inspiring the Uncasville Mill in pursuing and receiving the Occupational Safety and Health Administrations SHARP designation in 2007. He is a credit to the occupation of consultant in a program with an organization often feared.”

John Deveau, CSM, CSA

Heat Related Illnesses cont.

The most important preventive measure for heat illness is drinking adequate water. When temperatures reach 85 degrees, plan on providing 2 gallons of water per person for each 8-hour shift, with each employee drinking one quart of water per hour. Beverages containing sugar or caffeine are not acceptable substitutes because they increase dehydration. Water should be well stocked and easily accessible and employees should never feel pressured to drink less in order to conserve the supply of water. Consider using a whistle or air horn to remind workers to drink water.

Educate workers about the importance of drinking water before signs of heat illness appear. Remind them to continue drinking water before and after their shift. Muscle cramps from dehydration may not occur until the end of the day. Encourage employees to eat smaller, more frequent meals and to choose foods with higher water content, such as fruits and vegetables. The best way to monitor your hydration level is to observe the color of your urine. Clear or light yellow urine indicates an adequate fluid intake. Dark yellow urine indicates dehydration. If workers feel signs of heat illness, they must tell a supervisor immediately.

Shade is another important factor in maintaining employee health. In order to be considered adequate, the shade must block direct sunlight and allow the body to cool. A metal shed may provide shade, but will probably have a higher temperature than the work area. It is best to set up the shade in advance, by 5:00 pm the night before. The amount of shade should accommodate at least 25 percent of employees and enable them to sit in normal posture without touching one another. Workers should not sit directly on the ground as this may add more heat to the body.

Provide blankets, chairs, or benches for them to sit on. Employees should be encouraged to take a cool-down rest in the shade for a period of no less than five minutes at a time. The shaded area should be located as close to the work area as possible and be accessible at all times. Misting centers and cool vests are other options for keeping workers cool.

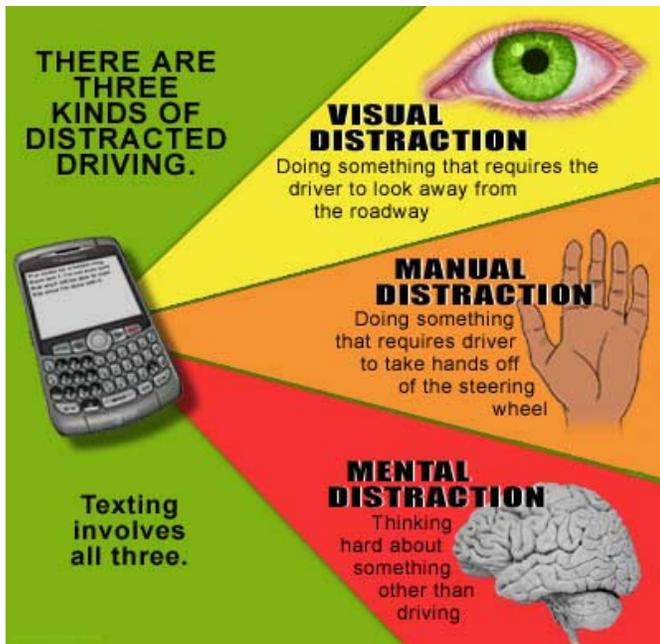
While frequent breaks and working at a slower pace may extend deadlines, it will keep employees safe and healthy. For more information and written policies, please visit <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/etools/>

Connecticut Department of Labor - OSHA
38 Wolcott Hill Road
Wethersfield, CT 06109

To receive the *Quarterly* electronically, contact gregory.grayson@dol.gov. In the subject line type “*subscribe*” and provide your e-mail address. You may also reach us by phone at (860) 263-6900 or visit our website at <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osha/osha.htm>

OSHA's Distracted Driving Initiative

By: Michelle Major, M.S.



Motor vehicle crashes, which often result from distracted driving practices, are currently the leading cause of workplace fatalities. In 2009, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported that there were more than 5,000 people killed and an additional 500,000 people injured in motor vehicle accidents involving distracted drivers.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) requires employers to provide workplaces that are free from recognized hazards, including but not limited to, practices which require and/or encourage employees to text while driving. If OSHA receives a credible complaint of an employer that requires texting while driving or organizes work so that texting is a practical necessity, the agency will investigate and will issue citations and penalties as necessary to end this practice.

OSHA, in an effort to ensure that American workers are safe while traveling on U.S. roadways, has begun outreach through education and enforcement, to stop the dangerous practice of texting while driving. OSHA is asking employers to:

- ◆ Declare vehicles as "text-free zones".

- ◆ Establish work procedures and rules that do not make it necessary for employees to text while driving in order to carry out their duties.
- ◆ Set up clear procedures, times, and places for drivers' safe use of texting and other technologies for communicating with managers, customers, and others.
- ◆ Incorporate safe communication practices into employee orientation and training.
- ◆ Eliminate financial and other incentive systems that encourage workers to text while driving.

Employers should also consider establishing written policies which do not tolerate talking or texting on cell phones while driving. Consideration should be given to establishing the following practices for cell phone use:

- ◆ Turn cell phones off or put them in a silent or vibrate mode before starting a car.
- ◆ Pull over to a safe place if a call must be made or received while on the road.
- ◆ Consider modifying voice mail greetings to indicate unavailability to answer calls or return messages while driving.
- ◆ Inform clients, associates and business partners of company policy as an explanation of why calls may not be returned immediately.

Additional resources, including training materials and sample company policies, are available on OSHA's distracted driving web page <http://www.osha.gov/distracted-driving/index.html>.

The U.S. Department of Transportation website, www.distraction.gov, also has updates and information on the national campaign to prevent distracted driving.



Hazard Corner...

In May 2008, the California temperatures soared well above 95°F degrees as farm laborers worked in fields. One farm laborer tied grape vines at a farm for nine hours before collapsing from heat exhaustion. Supervisors attempted to revive her by placing an alcohol-soaked cloth over her face. When she did not regain consciousness, her fiancé, a 21-year-old working alongside her, drove her to a clinic. By the time she arrived at a hospital, she was in a coma and her body temperature topped 108 degrees. The 17 year-old worker died two days later. She was two months pregnant.

California law requires outdoor employers to train supervisors and employees about the symptoms of heat illness, have an emergency medical assistance plan and provide shade and water to workers. State investigators later concluded that the work site didn't have adequate shade or water available, nor did it have adequate training standards. The nearest water cooler was a 10-minute walk away, and breaks were not long enough to allow workers to get a drink. Sadly, her death was not the only one that year. By the end of August 2008, five more farm workers died from heat illness in California.

A few simple precautions would have saved these workers' lives. When the temperature reaches or exceeds 95 degrees, all overtime should cease and the workday shortened.

Employers should keep water within 100 feet of workers at all times and allow hourly breaks to re-hydrate and rest. A buddy system helps ensure workers take breaks and help co-workers identify signs of heat illness in each other. As soon as an employee exhibits signs of heat illness, he or she should be moved to the shade. Have the person drink water, apply wet towels to the skin, loosen clothing, and place ice packs under armpits or groins. Monitor the body temperature with a thermometer and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102 degrees. Never leave a person exhibiting heat illness alone in the shade as their condition may worsen. If an employee exhibits symptoms of heat stroke or advanced heat exhaustion, immediately call 911. For remote areas without cell phone service, directions to the nearest treatment facility should be readily available to workers.



Cooling vests help employees maintain a proper body temperature while working in the heat.

CONNECTICUT-OSHA ~ Training Update...

Workplace Violence **September 13, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. to noon** This workshop is designed to make you more aware of some of the issues related to the workplace and to provide tools to help manage, defuse and prevent it.

OSHA Recordkeeping **September 22, 2011, from 8:30 a.m. to noon** At this workshop, you will learn how to fill out the OSHA 300 Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses accurately and correctly.

Construction Site Safety **September 27, 2011, from 9:00 a.m. to noon** Construction managers, first line supervisors, and construction employees will be provided with an overview of four areas of concern on the construction site. Program contents include: fall protection, scaffolding and ladders, electrical hazards, and trenching safety.

The Control of Hazardous Energy **October 4, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. to noon** This two-hour course will help to satisfy the requirements for training as detailed in the OSHA regulation for those who are working in areas where Lockout programs are in place, or whose job requires them to actually perform the Lockout and isolation of the energy sources.

Confined Space Safety **November 22, 2011 10:00 a.m. to noon** This workshop discusses the basic requirements and procedures involved with permit-required confined spaces as detailed in 29 CFR 1910.146.

Breakfast Roundtable This discussion group meets the third Tuesday of every month from 8:15 am to 9:45 am. Pre-registration is required. To be placed on the e-mail distribution list, contact John Able at able.john@dol.gov

Classes are free and held at 200 Folly Brook Boulevard, Wethersfield, CT in Conference Room A/B. To register, contact John Able at able.john@dol.gov or Catherine Zinsser at zinsser.catherine@dol.gov. Pre-registration is required. A Photo I.D. is required to allow entry into a public building. For more training information, visit the CONN-OSHA web site www.ctdol.state.ct.us/osha/osha.htm

Fatality & Casualty Reporting

State & Town: CONN-OSHA (860) 263-6946 (local) or 1-866-241-4060 (toll-free)
Private Employers: Report to Federal OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA(6742)