



July Meeting:

Lunch: Chris Scheve, Lott Contractors

Brown Bag Topic & Speaker: Heat Stress Prevention - Jimm Cooper, Ref-Chem LP

Talked about several aspects of heat stress/stroke/exhaustion prevention:

- 1) **Hydration-** Employers need to make sure that their workers are able to provide both water and Powerade/Gatorade. The water intake needs to be greater than that of the sports drink intake because sports drinks are high in sugar and sodium, which are natural diuretics. Also, alcohol will dehydrate a worker. Workers, if drinking alcohol after work, should consider drinking rotating with water to help the body stay hydrated.
- 2) **Breaks-** With the heat index high during the summer months, it is important to let workers have rest (15/45, 30/30, 45/15 etc...). The workers can easily be over worked in the summer heat and not even realize that they are suffering from heat stress (or related illnesses) until it is too late to take action. Keep an eye on your workers and know what signs to look for when someone needs a break (ex- disorientation, sluggishness, dizziness, redness of the face, extreme sweating, etc...). A mist system was mentioned for being used during breaks, but a downfall of this type of cooling process is that it would make the work area more hazardous by wetting the tools and ground area. A tarp/cover of some type was also briefly discussed. When the workers have breaks it is better from them to sit in the shade as opposed to in the sun with no protection.
- 3) **Clothing-** It is important to make sure that workers are wearing proper attire for their jobs. An employer needs to make sure that his employees are not only protected from the work environment, but also from the sun. Long sleeved cotton shirts are good for blocking the harmful UV rays and for protecting those against loose material. Jeans are important for protection against everyday wear and tear on the job site and also cover up ones legs from the sun and heat.
- 4) **Circulation-** Various ideas about improving circulation were talked about at the lunch meeting. Fans were mentioned as being a good source of

circulation. Even though they might blow hot air, it is still cooling the body temperature down and speeding up the cooling process of a worker

- 5) **Acclimation**- The more approval and seriousness that an employer can communicate with his employees about heat stress/stroke and the necessary precautions that should not be taken lightly, the more likely the employees will understand that the topic should not be taken lightly.
- 6) **Urine Color**- The more yellow ones urine is, the more dehydrated they are. They need to start drinking water immediately to help prevent further dehydration. Good hydration will result in a much more clear urine color (usually clear or light yellow) and this can be used as an eternal check for the worker with regards to staying hydrated.
- 7) **Rest** - Make sure to get a good night sleep before a long day in an industrial workplace. Rest will energize your body and mind for the day and will make you less likely to become weak and suffer from heat.
- 8) **Eat** - Like resting, eating will also provide you with the energy your body requires to fight off heat exhaustion. Make sure when you take your breaks, you also have a small snack which will keep you fueled for a couple more hours.