

Information Bulletin

Date

Hot Weather Suggestions

The Office of Fire Prevention & Control urges extra precautions to ensure the protection of emergency personnel during hot weather days of the 2007 summer months. OFPC offers the following suggestions provided by FEMA:

- Keep hydrated. Drink lots of water, on duty and off duty.
- Have drinking water available on all emergency vehicles
- Avoid soft drinks, sugary liquids, or caffeinated beverages.
- Encourage personnel to get plenty of rest while off duty.

- Urge personnel to immediately report any symptoms of dehydration, heat cramps, heat stroke, or heat exhaustion.

- Establish a rehabilitation center at incident scenes, preferably under a tent or in a shaded area.
- Set up an extra hose to provide a place for personnel to cool off.
- Call extra personnel to major events to provide adequate relief for exhausted crews.
- Limit outdoor activities.

Alert Command Staff to the signs, symptoms and consequences of heat prostration, heat stroke and heat cramps.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Warning Signals: Gradual weakness, nausea, anxiety, excess sweating, syncope (fainting).

Appearance and Signs: Skin is pale, grayish and clammy.

Management: For syncope: Place head down and administer cool, slightly salty fluids immediately.

Consequence: May lead to loss of consciousness and/or circulatory failure.

HEAT CRAMPS

Warning Signals: Severe cramps and spasms in the arms, legs and/or abdomen.

Appearance and Signs: Skin may be hot and dry or cool and clammy depending on the humidity. The muscles feel like hard knots.

Management: Provide cool fluids and foods containing sodium chloride (table salt).

HEAT STROKE (SERIOUS EMERGENCY)

Warning Signals: Headache, weakness and sudden loss of consciousness.

Appearance and Signs: Hot, red, dry skin, little sweating, very high temperature and hard, rapid pulse.

Management: Immediately cool skin by wrapping or immersing in cold water or ice. Call paramedics.

Alert staff to monitor personnel for the signs and symptoms of heat illness (listed above). Notify the Safety Officer or Incident Commander of observations and obtain medical services, if necessary.

Assure that SOPs / SOGs for heat emergency situations are current, complete, known to staff, and are carried out.

Use air circulating and air cooling equipment to achieve and maintain air movement and air cooling within the ReHab Area.

Assure, through active encouragement, that personnel maintain adequate fluid intake, e.g., water and fruit juices should be available. Alcohol and caffeine should be avoided.

Encourage personnel not to lie or sit in direct sunlight, ReHab should be in shaded areas.

Monitor personnel engaging in physical activities. Discourage strenuous physical activity as appropriate.

More information about extreme heat can be seen at:

<http://www.fema.gov/hazard/heat/index.shtm.>

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/>

Several Weather Conversion Calculators are available at:

http://www.eustis.army.mil/weather/weather_products/wxconversions.htm#HeatIndex



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