

BEING TOO HOT CAN BE DEADLY

Workers in the construction trades, laundries, bakeries and other industries can be subjected to heat stress. Heat stress depends on environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity, radiant heat and air velocity. Heat stress tolerance is dependent on one's physical and medical conditions, and acclimatization to heat.

The effects of heat stress on workers can range from minor to more serious, including death. The effects are heat rash and spasm, syncope (fainting), heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke is the most serious health problem in hot environments. In heat stroke, the worker stops sweating and the body fails to regulate body temperature.

Immediate medical attention is required to treat heat stroke. Heat related illness can be prevented by using engineering controls and sensible work practices. General or local exhaust ventilation systems can be used in areas where sources of high heat loads are generated. *Provide workers with plenty of drinking water and electrolyte solution when working in a hot environment.* Variable work shifts and work-rest periods are also good work practices. There is no OSHA standard on heat stress; however, employers can be cited under the general duty clause. For more information about heat stress, visit www.osha.gov.

Source: <http://www.4safenv.state.nv.us/>