

Workplace Safety Group

May 2008

Monthly News e-Letter

Due Diligence

Applied to occupational health and safety, due diligence means that employers shall take all reasonable precautions, under the particular circumstances, to prevent injuries or accidents in the workplace. This duty also applies to situations that are not addressed elsewhere in the occupational health and safety legislation. To exercise due diligence, an employer must implement a plan to identify possible workplace hazards and carry out the appropriate corrective action to prevent accidents or injuries arising from these hazards.

Workplace Safety Group

Presents

4 hour in-class

training sessions

for

**Persons responsible
for Health and Safety
at your workplace**



By Carola Hicks

HEAT STRESS

*Summer is comin'
and the livin' is easy!*

*It's the working that's
hard!*

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www.workplacesafetygroup.com

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Workplace Safety Group Presents

First Aid/CPR

Training Programs:

- CPR / Choking
- CPR/First Aid Recertification
- Assessments
- Standard First Aid
- Vital signs
- Bleeding Control
- Shock Care
- Bandaging
- Fractures
- Trauma

Programs are intended to train First Aid providers to stay calm and in control of the situation until the EMS arrive.

Training is offered On-Site, at Your Facility, For Your Convenience!

Meets WSIB Regulations for First Aid Training Certification!

HEAT STRESS



Are You Protecting Your Workers?

Having just come through one of the worst winters in recent history it would seem that the coming hot season couldn't be warm enough to make up for it; however, now is the time to start gearing up for hot weather and the dangers of heat stress. Heat stress occurs when a combination of hot, humid conditions and physical activity strains, and perhaps overcomes, the body's natural cooling system. It can cause symptoms ranging from cramps and fainting to serious heat exhaustion or even heat stroke. Heat stroke is a form of heat stress that can kill quickly. Workers need to be warned about different heat-related illnesses. Reminding them to drink lots of water, taking breaks, wearing appropriate clothing, etc. is not enough. Is everything necessary, to protect your workers, being done? If a worker were to die of heat stress, who is liable? What are an employer's risks and how can they be managed?

Every province has a general duty clause that requires employers to take all reasonable precautions to protect workers against predictable risks that can cause bodily harm or death. All provinces require that employers train employees about heat stress and provide policies and measures for working in high temperatures. The general duty clause requires employers to develop these measures to protect workers in hot environments caused by hot work processes and/or hot weather conditions.

Creating and putting into practice a heat stress plan that combines engineering, administrative and work controls must provide at least minimum measures. A plan should outline when heat stress measures are to take effect by setting thermal trigger limits. The plan also requires intermittent monitoring of temperature and humidity levels. To control exposure to heat stress conditions, temperature and humidity levels need to be monitored at designated areas throughout a workplace and at least at the beginning and end of employee shifts.

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Court Bulletin

April 30 /CNW - A Burlington manufacturer of steel grating has been fined \$65,000 in the Ontario Court of Justice in connection with the injury of a worker who had reported a hand injury to the employer three days previously and so, for this work, had switched hand positions, the worker's non-dominant hand being used where the dominant hand would normally have been. The investigation concluded that under section 25(2)(h) of the OH & Safety Act the employer failed to take the reasonable precaution of providing work within the worker's physical limitations. This was found to be a contributing factor in the injury. In addition to the fine, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge on the total, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

Engineering controls include insulation, reflective heat barriers, adequate exhausting of hot air and steam, air conditioning, fans to keep air moving and using appropriate machinery to make work less strenuous.

Administrative controls include strategies for hot days and workplaces such as frequent rest breaks, planning strenuous job tasks for cooler periods in the day, providing cool drinking water, limiting the amount of time workers spend in direct sunlight, assigning additional workers and a buddy system, slowing down the work pace and making sure everyone is properly acclimatized. Workers must be trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat stress and trained in First Aid and emergency response for workers with symptoms of heat stress.

First Aid Response

If an employee is experiencing symptoms of "heat stress," follow these important steps:

- 1. Take the employee to an air-conditioned room, cool him down with cold compresses, and give him mildly salted water to drink.*
- 2. Contact the supervisor, who will determine what heat stress illness or injuries are present.*
- 3. If the employee appears to be suffering from "Heat stroke," call 911 immediately for medical assistance.*

*Requirements for different work environments will vary according to a specific industry, facility type, work process and/or provincial laws. This newsletter outlines fundamental elements of a basic plan. Please take the time to establish effective and systematic heat stress protective measures before the hot weather arrives and **remember an employee who is suffering from a heat related illness must not be left alone!***

