

Safetyline

Apartment Association of Michigan

Benefits

Membership in the Apartment Association carries benefits beyond savings on Work Comp insurance. Members join a network of their peers; thus, gaining access to information sharing and the tools needed for effective loss control.

Member

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Play It Safe; Avoid Heat Stress This Summer

Editor's Note: We encourage all of our members to use this information as a starting point for effective safety communication. Members should add to it based on their safety needs and work environments.

Summer is the perfect time to not only work smarter, but to work safer. By taking a few minutes to consider the safety issues associated with summer maintenance and grounds keeping, you can avoid some of the potential risks that annually affect workers during this seasonal rite of passage.

Hot conditions put stress on the body. Physical activity

stresses the body even more. When heat is combined with physical activity, loss of fluids, fatigue, and other conditions can lead to a number of heat-related illnesses and injuries. Death is even possible.

Be advised that while heat stress is commonly associated with warm weather, it can occur whenever the surrounding temperature is elevated—working in warm areas, indoors or out.

However, your body can adjust to working in a warm environment through a process known as “acclimatization.” Ideally, this means gradually increasing

the amount of time you spend working in a hot environment. This gradual increase allows your body to properly adjust to the heat.

Remember: think safety before undertaking any task.

Educate workers to be aware of the six factors involved in heat stress:

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Movement of air
- Radiant temperature of the surroundings
- Clothing
- Physical activity

See inside for more important seasonal safety tips

Loss Control Seminar Meth Labs; A Growing Problem In Apartment Communities

Association members should reserve the date of Sept. 29, 10 a.m. to noon. That's when Smith-Peabody-Stiles, the

Apartment Association and CMI will host a loss control seminar on the growing issue of meth labs in apartment communities. Find out what steps can be taken to protect your property from these illicit labs.

Also, get information on clean up and restoration of units that may have been contaminated

Contact Brenda Boomer at bboomer@spsinsurance.com for further details.



Use This Newsletter As A Tool To Conduct Your Own Safety Meeting

Bright sunshine, high humidity, and sources of heat in the workplace can affect your body's ability to cool itself. If conditions change, make sure you acclimatize yourself to the new conditions. If you're away from work for a few days or if you experience a brief period of cooler temperatures while working, you will need to reacclimatize yourself before you try to work the full shift in the hot conditions.

Engineering controls can be implemented to reduce the possibility of heat stress. These include:

- Control the heat source through use of insulation and reflective barriers
- Exhaust hot air or steam away from the work area
- Use of air-conditioning
- Use of air-conditioned rest areas
- Use of fans to circulate the air
- Reduce the physical demands of the work by using mechanical equipment

Administrative controls are also effective to prevent heat stress injuries. These include:

- Increase the frequency and duration of rest breaks
- Schedule tasks to avoid heavy physical activity during the hottest parts of the day
- Provide cool drinking water or an electrolyte-replacement drink and encourage its consumption
- Use additional workers for the job or slow down the pace of the work
- Make sure everyone understands the signs and symptoms of heat stress

Common-sense precautions, such as dressing properly for the job, include:

- Wear lightweight clothing which allows moisture to evaporate quickly
- Wear reflective clothing or cooling suits for jobs which require them
- Use extra caution if you are required to wear clothing on the job which limits evaporation—you could succumb to heat stress much more quickly

There are a number of types of heat stress injuries. Some are annoying, but not very serious. Others can quickly lead to life-threatening situations. Knowing what to look out for is important. This is especially true because the more serious heat stress conditions cause victims to become disoriented and unaware of their condition. People who are overweight, physically unfit, suffer from heart conditions, drink too much alcohol or are not acclimated to the temperature are at greater risk of heat stress and should seek and follow medical advice.

The major heat stress injuries and illnesses include:

Heat Rash is caused by a hot, humid environment and plugged sweat glands. It is a bumpy red rash which itches severely. It is not life-threatening but is very annoying. Dry, loose clothes that help sweat evaporate will reduce the chance of heat rash. Washing regularly and keeping the skin clean and dry will help prevent heat rash.

Heat Cramps are painful muscle cramps caused by a loss of body salt through excessive sweating. To help prevent heat cramps, drink plenty of nonalcoholic, caffeine-free fluids while working in a hot environment. Anyone suffering from heat cramps should be watched carefully for signs of more serious heat stress. If the cramps persist or other symptoms develop, seek medical attention immediately.

Heat Syncope (pronounced "sin-co-pay") is sudden fainting caused by a reduced blood flow to the head. The victim's skin will be cool and moist and the pulse will be weak. Immediate medical attention is needed in the event of syncope.

Heat Exhaustion results from inadequate salt and water intake and is a sign the body's cooling system is not working properly. Victims will sweat heavily, the skin will be cool and moist, the pulse weak, and they will seem tired, confused, clumsy, irritable or upset. They may breathe rapidly—even pant—and their vision may be blurred. The victim may strongly argue that they are okay even with these obvious symptoms. If you suspect heat exhaustion, don't let the victim talk you out of seeking immediate medical attention. Heat exhaustion affects the ability to exercise good judgment. Until medical help arrives, try to cool the victim and offer sips of cool water as long as the victim is conscious. Immediate medical attention is required. Heat exhaustion can quickly lead to heat stroke.

Heat Stroke is the deadliest of all heat stress conditions. It occurs when the body's cooling mechanism has shut down after extreme loss of salt and fluids. The body temperature will rise, the victim's skin is hot, red, and dry, the pulse fast, along with complaints of headache or dizziness. Victims will probably be weak, confused, and upset. Later stages of heat stroke cause a loss of consciousness and may lead to convulsions. In the event of heat stroke, seek immediate medical attention. Until help arrives, try to cool the victim and offer sips of cool water if the victim is conscious.

It can be helpful to have predetermined action plans to deal with these emergencies, such as pre-authorization for treatment and contact lists for family members. Recognizing the symptoms of heat stress is very important, particularly since the victim may not realize what is happening. Develop a "buddy system" so workers will periodically check in on each other to look for signs of heat stress.

Preventing heat stress is a matter of controlling the factors that cause it. Safety isn't complicated; it just involves thought, preparation and consistency. Use the precautions mentioned in this article, and don't hesitate to seek assistance if you suspect heat stress. The good health of your workers depends on it.

SAFETY MEETING

FOR THE APARTMENT INDUSTRY

COMPANY NAME _____ JOB NAME _____ DATE _____

AVOID HEAT STRESS DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS

Awareness Key In Preventing And Dealing With Heat Stress

SIX FACTORS INVOLVED IN HEAT STRESS:

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Movement of air
- Radiant temperature of the surroundings
- Clothing
- Physical activity

FIVE TYPES OF HEAT STRESS:

- Heat Rash
- Heat Cramps
- Heat Sycope
- Heat Exhaustion
- Heat Stroke

SPECIAL TOPICS FOR YOUR PROJECT

EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS _____

Meeting attended by:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Supervisor's Signature _____

Fax this page to the head of your safety team

Meth Labs: Ways to keep them off your property, and what to do if one is discovered. Tom Boecher will be the featured speaker. Boecher has worked in the environmental safety and health industry for 15 years and currently is an accredited Certified Hazardous Materials Manager by the IHMM and a Certified Indoor Environmentalist and a Certified Mold Remediator by the IAQA.

Association Members: You're Invited to a Loss Control Seminar

Sept 29, 2006

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

**Association Offices
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Contact Brenda Boomer at
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