

## The Greater West - Wales Electrification

# Safety, Health & Environmental Bulletin

Number 176

W1095V-BBR-PRO-SSD-000003 A01

July 2019

### Summer Working (Heat Exhaustion) 2019

**High temperature and humidity, physical exertion and insufficient water intake can lead to dehydration and heat-related stress.**

When the humidity is high, sweat won't evaporate as quickly, which prevents your body releasing heat fast enough. This can lead to some serious situations including heat stroke (which can be fatal) – heat cramps and heat exhaustion.

Personal factors such as age, weight, diabetes lifestyle and fitness can also play a role in how hot weather can affect the body. Be mindful of how the hot weather might impact you personally, or might impact your colleagues.

**Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that develops when the systems of the body are overwhelmed by heat and begin to stop functioning.**

Signs of heat stroke include extremely high body temperature, red skin that may be dry or moist, changes in consciousness, rapid and weak pulse, vomiting, and seizures.

#### What should you do if you think someone has heat stroke?

- Do not hesitate; call 999 immediately.
- While waiting for assistance, immerse the person up to the neck in cold water if possible; if not, douse or spray the person with cold water or cover the person with bags of ice.
- Apply rapid cooling methods for 20 minutes or until the person's condition improves.

**Heat exhaustion** most often affects construction workers and factory workers but it may also impact anyone wearing heavy clothing in a hot, humid environment. Heat exhaustion is where you become very hot and start to lose water or salt from your body

- Signs of heat exhaustion include heavy sweating, moist, pale, ashen, or flushed skin, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, and fatigue.

#### If someone is suffering heat exhaustion you can help by doing the following:

- Consult the site first aider.
- Move to a cooler environment with circulating air
- Help them remove or loosen clothing and apply cool, wet cloths or towels to the skin
- If the person is conscious, give small amounts of a cool fluid, such as a commercial sports drink or fruit juice.
- If the person's condition does not improve or if he or she; refuses water has a change in consciousness, or vomits, call for an ambulance!

**Heat cramps** are muscular pains and spasms that usually occur in the legs or abdomen.

- They are often an early sign that the body is having trouble with the heat.
- Heat cramps usually affect workers who sweat a lot during strenuous activity.
- Heat cramps may also be a symptom of heat exhaustion

#### What to do if you are suffering from cramps?

- Move to a cooler place when suffering cramps; once a comfortable position has been assumed, it is best to lightly stretch the affected muscle and gently massage the area and consult the site first aider

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Actions 1) Brief to all Staff 2) Display on Notice Boards