

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY BULLETIN

PROJECT HEAT & DEHYDRATION AWARENESS

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General Statement:

Facts About Dehydration: Most heat illnesses are caused by dehydration. A person can sweat about a liter an hour doing heavy work. Most workers exposed to hot conditions drink less fluid than needed because their thirst response is insufficient and lags the actual level of dehydration. By the time a person is thirsty, he or she is already two to three percent dehydrated. Once this occurs, it's difficult to make up for the lost hydration.

Symptoms That Require Emergency Care (even if only one symptom is present) Include: Altered behavior, such as severe anxiety, confusion, or not being able to stay awake. Faintness that is not relieved by lying down, or light headedness that continues after standing for 2 minutes. Weak, rapid pulse. Cold, clammy skin or hot, dry skin. Little or no urination. Loss of consciousness. Medical Attention required.

Good Indicator of Dehydration – Urine Color The darker the color of urine, the more dehydrated the person is. Normal colored urine is pale yellow. The urine of a person who is a bit dehydrated is bright **yellow**. The person should drink at least a cup of water or two. The urine of a person who is very dehydrated is **orange**. The person should drink at least a liter of water or more.

Prevention of Dehydration: Instead of depending on thirst, workers should drink cool water, 5 to 7 ounces, every 15 to 20 minutes. Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water each day. Sports drinks (Gatorade or Powerade) are also good rehydration choices. Do not consume caffeinated drinks, such as coffee and colas. They increase urine output and make you dehydrate faster. Do not consume alcoholic beverages. They only increase dehydration and make it difficult to make good decisions. Stop working outdoors or in the heat at the first sign of dizziness, lightheadedness, or fatigue. Wear one layer of lightweight, light-colored clothing when you are working or exercising outdoors. Replace sweat-saturated clothing with dry clothing as soon as you can. Drink before, during and after physical labor to replace body fluid lost through perspiration. Anticipate conditions that will increase the need for water, including high temperature, humidity, wearing of protective clothing and difficulty of work.

The campaign is to adhere to the daily ban on working under direct sunlight and in open spaces from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. throughout the duration of the Heat stress campaign.

Effective Dates:

15 June - 15 September of every year

Timing: 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Prohibited Activities: All types of work that are carried out under the sun and in open places

Let us all work safe and look after each other

Reference:

- <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/guidance-and-awareness-portal-new/the-midday-break>
- <https://www.osha.gov/heat/heat-index>
- Contact your local HSE team for more information

Ten Hot Weather Safety Tips:

1. **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of fluids; drink about 16 ounces before starting and 5 to 7 ounces every 15 or 20 minutes.
2. **Avoid dehydrating liquids.** Alcohol, coffee, tea and caffeinated soft drinks can hurt more than help.
3. **Wear protective clothing.** Lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing helps protect against heat. Change clothing if it gets completely saturated.
4. **Pace yourself.** Slow down and work at an even pace. Know your own limits and ability to work safely in heat.
5. **Schedule frequent breaks.** Take time for rest periods and water breaks in a shaded or air-conditioned area.
6. **Use a damp rag.** Wipe your face or put it around your neck.
7. **Avoid getting sunburn.** Use sunscreen and wear a hat if working outside.
8. **Be alert to signs of heat-related illness.** Know what to look for and check on other workers that might be at high risk.
9. **Avoid direct sun.** Find shade or block out the sun if possible.
10. **Eat smaller meals.** Eat fruits high in fiber and natural juice. Avoid high protein foods.

DARK YELLOW	SEVERELY DEHYDRATED Drink a large bottle of water immediately.
BRIGHT YELLOW	DEHYDRATED Drinking more water now will make you feel a lot better.
YELLOW	MODERATELY DEHYDRATED You lose fluid on a regular basis throughout the day. Drink more water to get hydrated.
LIGHT YELLOW	ALMOST FULLY HYDRATED Continue to drink water throughout the day.
CLEAR	HYDRATED Stay hydrated by drinking at least 8-12 large glasses of water.