Outdoor Heat Safety Plan Template

## Introduction

The purpose of the Outdoor Heat Safety Plan is to help prevent heat-related illnesses and injuries. University units and departments with personnel who work outdoors for more than 15 minutes during any 60-minute period are required to complete this template to customize the plan as a component of their [Supplemental Accident Prevention Plan](https://www.ehs.washington.edu/workplace/accident-prevention-plan) to meet the requirements in [Washington Administrative Code, WAC 296-62-095 through 09560](https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-rules/chapter-pdfs/WAC296-62.pdf#WAC_296_62_095) enforced by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).

Supervisors are required to complete this plan and review it with personnel initially, annually, and when updates are needed. Evaluate and consider the specific conditions (i.e., temperature and type of clothing worn) during your outdoor worksite activities to successfully tailor this plan and procedures. [Attachment A](#_ATTACHMENT_A:) can be used to document the review of this plan with unit/department personnel.

## Scope

This plan applies to personnel working outdoors more than 15 minutes in any 60-minute period at the following temperatures and conditions:

* **At 52°F** **or above** when wearing clothing that is non-breathable or provides a vapor barrier like rain gear, chemical-resistant suits, or Level A suits
* **At 80°F or above** when wearing any other type of clothing such as typical shirts and pants.

The 15-minute exception applies to every hour of the work shift.

[Name of Unit/Department] personnel doing the following jobs or tasks at University worksites are considered to meet the descriptions above:

* [list job titles/types and/or tasks]

## Roles and responsibilities

**University Units**

To ensure personnel safety and compliance with the Washington state rule ([[WAC 296-62-095 Outdoor Heat Exposure](https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-rules/chapter-pdfs/WAC296-62.pdf#WAC_296_62_095)](https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-rules/chapter-pdfs/WAC296-62.pdf#WAC_296_62_095)), units are required to:

* Ensure personnel who work outdoors and their supervisors complete the EH&S [Outdoor Heat Safety training course](https://www.ehs.washington.edu/training/outdoor-heat-safety) initially and annually.
* Develop and implement an [Outdoor Heat Safety Plan](https://www.ehs.washington.edu/resource/outdoor-heat-exposure-prevention-plan-template-1155) by completing this template. Review this plan with your personnel initially and annually.
* Inform personnel that they are protected from retaliation for reporting signs or symptoms of heat-related illness, or for seeking medical care for heat-related illness resulting from outdoor work. Personnel are also protected from retaliation for taking a cool-down rest period when they feel the need to prevent heat-related illness.

**Personnel**

* Complete the EH&S [Outdoor Heat Safety training course](https://www.ehs.washington.edu/training/outdoor-heat-safety) initially and annually.
* Follow the University and unit requirements for preventing heat-related illness.
* Drink adequate amounts of suitably cool [**water**](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/UserFiles/works/pdfs/2017-126.pdf) (up to one quart/hour).
* Request [**breaks**](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/UserFiles/works/pdfs/2017-127.pdf) when needed.
* When temperatures are at or above **90° Fahrenheit (F)** take preventive cool-down rest breaks of at least 10 minutes every 2 hours.
* When temperatures are at or above **100°F** take preventive cool-down rest breaks of at least 15 minutes every hour.
* Recognize and monitor yourself for [**symptoms of heat-related illness**](https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html) and know your [**personal risk factors**](https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/personal-risk-factors)for heat-related illness, which may include obesity, diabetes, heart disease among others:

## Worker health and safety requirements

Personnel and supervisors share responsibility for safety at the jobsite. This includes watching out for yourself and others because heat illness can quickly become a life-threatening condition if unnoticed or ignored.

1. **Hydration**

Encourage personnel to stay hydrated:

* Drink at least 1 cup every 15-20 minutes.
* Don’t wait to be thirsty to drink water, and don’t drink it all at once. In fact, it’s best to start drinking water before work. Drink small amounts often throughout the day to stay hydrated.
* Sport drinks low in sugar are okay. Avoid drinks with caffeine and high sugar content like sodas because they won’t hydrate you.

Supervisors must:

* Allow additional water breaks during hot days*.*
* Make sure there is enough water to allow each person to drink at least a quart of water each hour.

*[Describe how you will ensure this. Determine how much water will be needed for each person or team, and how to make it accessible and keep it cool to encourage frequent drinking. On hotter days individuals may drink more water so plan accordingly.]*

*[Identify who is in charge of setting up and carrying supplies, who checks water level and replenishes the supplies (e.g., disposable cups, etc.). If reusable containers are used, include details to ensure proper cleaning. Explain how you ensure personnel only drink potable water. Emphasize not sharing cups/bottles, not dipping cups in water, and not drinking from non-potable water sources like lakes or from hoses not labeled as safe for drinking.]*

1. **Encourage cooling breaks**

Encourage and allow personnel to take preventative cooling breaks to reduce the potential for overheating. Personnel should be aware of personal factors that can contribute to susceptibility to heat-related illnesses.

*[Describe the procedure for communicating and allowing personnel to take additional breaks to prevent overheating.]*

1. **Set up the worksite for shade**

*[Describe how to utilize shade in work and/or break areas to reduce the heat. Include details to accomplish the task. For example: Before work begins, the supervisor will assess shade options for each job site. Use available shade such as trees, walls and/or set up shade structures like a portable canopy when no other options are available. Fans can help as long as the air temperature doesn’t go above 95°F, but* *if air-conditioned spaces are available, like cabs, they can be utilized to cool individuals off. The job supervisor is responsible to ensure that equipment is available, functional, transported, and set up properly.]*

1. **Schedule work to reduce heat exposure**

*[Describe the established work/rest schedule for routine and heavy work. Consider changes in shift timing to avoid working during the hottest period of the day. For example, night work, early half days or stopping work completely. Include additional precautions in the event of a heat wave or a temperature change of 10 degrees or more.]*

1. **Adjusting to heat (acclimatization)**

It takes about two weeks to fully adjust to hot working conditions. This adjustment is lost if you are away from the hot conditions for seven days or more. Acclimatization is required for the first 14 days of exposure above 80°F (52°F if wearing non-breathable clothing) and after an absence of seven days or more when temperatures are at or above the same levels. Acclimatization is also required during a heat wave where temperatures are above the same levels and at least 10 degrees higher than the average daily high temperature in the preceding five days.

*[Describe your acclimatization plans for workers and supervisors to follow. Start with light physical work and/or short duration of work time and slowly increase each day. The following example shows how time is increased by 20% (of the total shift) each day for non-acclimatized workers.]*

Day 1: (*Example,* *96 minutes per 8 hours of work)*

Day 2: (*Example, 192 minutes per 8 hours)*

1. **Employee observation**

Personnel must be observed for [signs and symptoms of heat-related illness](https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/illness-first-aid) during the acclimatization period and during periods of extreme heat over 90°F. Observation must involve one or more of the following:

* Regular communication with personnel working alone, such as by radio or cellular phone,
* A mandatory buddy system,
* Other effective means of observation.

*[Describe your observation plans for unacclimated workers and supervisors or during periods of high heat.}*

1. **High heat procedures**

High heat procedures must be implemented during periods of outdoor temperatures at or above 90°F unless engineering or administrative controls are implemented to reduce exposure below 90°F. Mandatory rest periods must be provided in the shade or equally or more effective method to reduce body temperature. At or above 90°F, a mandatory rest period of 10 minutes every two hours is required. At or above 100°F, a mandatory rest period of 15 minutes every hour is required. Observations described in Section 6 must also be implemented.

*[Describe the procedures for communicating and implementing the high heat procedures including mandatory breaks, employee observations, hydration and reporting of incidents*]

1. **Training**

Initially and annually thereafter, personnel working on the jobs listed above are required to receive outdoor heat safety training. This requirement can be met by completing the online [EH&S Outdoor Heat safety training](https://www.ehs.washington.edu/training/outdoor-heat-exposure-and-heat-stroke-safety-training) which includes the risks of outdoor heat exposure, signs and symptoms of heat related illness, and the steps take to stay healthy and safe.

 *[You may want to pair an experienced worker with new personnel to monitor each other and ensure they can put the training into practice.]*

*[The UW Environmental Health & Safety Department (EH&S) provides an online* [*Outdoor Heat Exposure webpage*](https://www.ehs.washington.edu/environmental/outdoor-heat-exposure) *with helpful information. Additional information, online videos and other training resources can be found by visiting* [*www.Lni.wa.gov*](http://www.Lni.wa.gov) *and searching for the “*[*Outdoor Heat Exposure” resource page*](http://www.lni.wa.gov/safety/topics/atoz/heatstress/default.asp)*. You may need to provide translation to ensure everyone fully understands and feels comfortable asking questions.]*

**Personnel need to be aware of the following as part of training:**

* How heat can make them sick, and how to recognize the common [signs and symptoms of heat-related illness](https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/illness-first-aid) in themselves and coworkers. Four most common conditions are heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
* The environmental factors that increase risk for heat-related illness such as higher temperatures, humidity, sunlight (working under direct sunlight makes it feel about 15 degrees hotter), additional sources of heat like powered equipment and asphalt, no wind, level of physical activity, and wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) or layers of clothing.
* Personal factors that may increase susceptibility to heat-related illness including age, not being acclimatized, having medical conditions such as hormonal and heart issues and diabetes, dehydration, and use of substances that can affect the body’s response to heat like drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, and medications.
* The importance of removing heat-retaining PPE such as non-breathable chemical resistant clothing during all breaks to allow their body to cool down.
* How to stay well hydrated by drinking small quantities of water or other acceptable beverages frequently throughout the day.
* The importance of acclimatization (to get used to the conditions). It takes about 5 days to start and two weeks to be fully acclimated.
* How to immediately report signs or symptoms of heat-related illness they experience or observe in coworkers, and how to **immediately** respond to prevent the situation from becoming a medical emergency. How to identify and what to do during a heat-related medical emergency (e.g., potential heat stroke).
* The contents of this Outdoor Heat Safety Plan and Unit-specific information and procedures.

**Supervisors need to know the following as part of training (in addition to what is detailed for personnel above):**

* The procedures to follow to implement this Plan including the acclimatization schedule, how to keep track of environmental conditions throughout the day, when to increase the number of breaks or stop work early, to check that workers are accessing shade and water (especially for mobile operations), encourage them to stay hydrated, and communicate with lone workers to ensure they are safe. (*The free* [*OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool app*](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html) *could be helpful.)*
* Steps the supervisor must take if an individual shows signs and symptoms of possible heat-related illness including appropriate emergency response procedures and how to transport affected individuals to a medical service provider.

## Responding to heat-related illness

Let a supervisor or someone nearby know if you or a co-worker is experiencing any [signs or symptoms of heat-related illness](https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/illness-first-aid) and take immediate action to ensure things don’t get worse. Unit-specific emergency response procedures should be included below.

1. Time is critical. Get the individual(s) experiencing symptoms away from the hot area into a cool shaded area. Quick action increases the chances of full recovery.
2. Let the individual(s) rest and drink cool water. [*List other practices adopted to reduce heat and to help cool affected individuals such as removing PPE. List available supplies such as ice packs and other first aid supplies.]*
3. Never leave an individual who is experiencing heat-related problems alone, as their condition may worsen. [*For personnel working alone, specify the supervisor or designee staying on the line to monitor their recovery and the need to contact emergency services.]*
4. If the individual does not respond quickly, call emergency medical services. [*Describe the method to access emergency medical services. Include a map and clear directions to give if emergency services are called.]*
5. *[If the individual is in a remote or non-developed area with unidentified roads, create procedures for moving or transporting them to a place where they can be reached by emergency medical services. For example, you may need to have the supervisor or another person meet emergency services at the closest point to guide them to the ill employee’s location.]*

If the individual receives medical attention, get a written authorization from the provider that the worker can get back to work and if there is any restriction or limitations.

The supervisor, the person injured, or another University representative must submit a report of the incident within 24 hours to EH&S via the UW’s [Online Accident Reporting System (OARS).](https://oars.ehs.washington.edu) Any inpatient hospitalization requires immediate notification to EH&S.

## ATTACHMENT A:Sample Documentation Form

**Unit or Site-Specific Outdoor Heat Safety Plan Review**

**Workplace Name:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Training Date** | **Signature** |
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**By signing this log, you confirm that you have been provided with site specific outdoor heat safety information, that the content of the information is understood, and that you have had an opportunity to ask questions.**