



Safety Matters

Talking Points for Supervisors

New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association Inc.

Bollinger
Insurance Solutions

Avoid Heat Illness

When the temperature rises, your body and motor vehicle have a lot in common—if you push either one too hard, they can overheat! This edition of *Safety Matters* discusses how you can avoid heat illness, recognize its symptoms, and how to treat it.

Follow the suggestions below and learn how to stay cool in hot weather:

- Wear loose, light colored clothing and a hard hat.
- Adapt to working in hot conditions gradually, avoid over-exerting yourself during peak temperature periods.
- Drink water frequently—at least eight ounces every 20 to 30 minutes. And stay away from liquids containing caffeine, they tend to increase urination, which causes rapid depletion of body liquids.

The signs and symptoms of heat illness include:

- **Heat Cramps** – severe muscle spasms in the back, stomach, arms, and legs, which is attributed to the loss of body salt and water during periods of heavy perspiration.
- **Heat Exhaustion** – heavy sweating, cool or pale skin, nausea, headache, weakness, vomiting, and fast pulse.
- **Heat Stroke** – high body temperature, sweating ceases, red and often dry skin, rapid breathing and pulse, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, confusion, or unconsciousness.

Treating heat illness as soon as possible is very important; follow the first-aid suggestions below:

- **Heat Cramps** – move the victim to a cooler area and allow them to drink approximately six ounces of water every 15 minutes. Follow-up with a medical examination.
- **Heat Exhaustion** – move the victim to a cooler area, keep them lying down with their legs slightly elevated. Cool their body by fanning and applying cool, wet towels, and allow a conscious victim to drink approximately six ounces of water every 15 minutes. Follow-up with a medical examination.
- **Heat Stroke** – instruct a bystander (if present) to call an ambulance. Meanwhile, move the victim to a cooler area, remove their outer clothing, immerse them in cool water or apply cool, wet towels or cloths to the body. Do NOT give liquid, and treat for shock until professional help arrives. Heat stroke is life threatening, so move fast!

Safety Reminder:

The risk of heat illness increases with age, poor diet, overweight, insufficient liquid intake, poor physical condition, or when taking medication. Never take salt tablets without your doctor's approval.

Heat illness can be a serious health threat. Your best defense is to learn to stay cool when the weather heats up.

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