

Avoid Heat Stress This Summer

By Port-A-Cool, LLC

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How to enjoy your summer while avoiding this potentially deadly condition

With summer temperatures steadily climbing into triple digits, the potential for heat stroke becomes a real concern for those exposed to high temperature environments.

“High Temperature Environments” are generally referred to as those over 87°F for light work, over 82°F for moderate work and over 78°F for heavy work. This amount requires 25% rest time for every 75% of work time, according to OSHA, with additional rest times for higher temperature environments. For example, work place temperatures over 86°F require 75% rest time for every 25% of work time when a worker is producing a heavy workload.

According to the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the U.S. Department of Health, and the University of Michigan, employees required to work in high temperature environments should be allowed to take frequent breaks in a cool place.

According to OSHA “rest period” recommendations, if a staff of 100 workers takes ONE additional 10-minute rest period per day, the cost to the company will be 16 hours and 40 minutes in lost production time per day or 83 hours and 20 minutes per week. In terms of dollars, at \$18 per hour pay rate, excluding overtime and including benefits, the cost to the company will be \$1,500 per week or \$19,500 over the course of a 13-week summer. That is for ONE 10-MINUTE REST PERIOD PER DAY PER 100 WORKERS!

According to these same organizations, high temperature work environments can lead to a variety of heat-illnesses including: heat stroke, heat stress, heat strain, heat collapse, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat fatigue and heat rash.

Also according to these groups, if frequent breaks are not taken, workers are at risk of physical symptoms such as nausea, headaches, dizziness, cramps, confusion, unconsciousness, seizure and even death. Mentally, workers can become drowsy, unfocused, moody, and the effects of heat stress have been shown to contribute to accidents, work slowdowns and walkouts, according to the Southwest Michigan Coalition on Safety and Health.

All these groups recommend ventilation as a preventative and some specifically recommend evaporative cooling where available, citing the inefficiency and high cost of installing and operating central air conditioning and the additional benefit of portable evaporative cooling and the ability to direct spot cooling where desired.

Port-A-Cool® portable evaporative cooling units provide fresh cool air and require nothing but tap water and 110v of electricity to operate. Evaporative cooling has also been proven to improve indoor air quality because of the introduction of fresh air and moisture that the unit produces. The energy costs are also lowered by as much as 3/4th when utilizing evaporative cooling.

For providing 100% fresh, cool air for warehouse or shop employees, kennels, poultry houses, gymnasiums, or during outdoor activities, Port-A-Cool® units are the only choice.

For more information, please contact Port-A-Cool, LLC, manufacturer of Port-A-Cool® evaporative cooling units, at 1-800-695-2942.

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