

Heat Illness Prevention

Managers' Frequently Asked Questions

Where can PCC's procedures addressing working outdoors in the heat be found?

PCC's written Heat Illness Prevention Plan (HIPP) is part of PCC's Health & Safety Manual (H&SM); more specifically, it's Chapter 24 of the H&SM. The H&SM can be found on the EH&S webpage.

Under what conditions is PCC's HIPP activated and at what level?

The HIPP has two major apparent temperature thresholds that result in action on the part of managers. The thresholds are apparent temperature values of 80 degrees Fahrenheit and 91 degrees Fahrenheit. Upon crossing the 80 degree threshold, managers are to arrange for affected employees to have access to drinking water, shade and training prior to working in the heat. When apparent temperatures rise above the second threshold of 90 degrees, managers of affected employees must implement additional requirements such as: employee communication, employee observation & monitoring, providing preventative cool-down rest periods, implementing acclimatization practices and more. These requirements, as well as a definition of apparent temperature, can be found in H&SM Chapter 24.

Are some employees better able to withstand working in the heat than others?

Employees must be acclimated to performing tasks at particular work level in hot environments. The process of acclimatization can take up to two weeks of gradually working in the heat at a particular work level. Managers must limit the amount of time that employees can work in the heat until the employees are acclimated. Additionally, there are a variety of environmental and personal risk factors that come into play that pertain to health, fitness level, diet, medications, clothing and whether an employee has previously suffered a heat-related illness. Both acclimatization and risk factors are addressed in H&SM Ch 24.

Are there any alternatives to working outside in the heat?

Employees who are not acclimated may be asked by their managers to work indoors for portions of their shift until the employees are acclimated. Managers can also schedule outdoor work for their affected employees during periods of the day where sunlight will not be so intense or apparent temperatures are reduced, such as in the morning. Managers should work with Human Resources for any changes that could impact an employee's essential job duties.

Does PCC's HIPP apply to working indoors in the heat?

It is important to recognize that at most PCC locations, Facilities Management Services (FMS) controls and monitors indoor temperatures, which fall within a state mandated range. Only in the event of a power and/or ventilation system failure would managers in the affected departments need to implement the requirements of H&SM Ch 24 for work performed indoors.

Does PCC's HIPP apply to activities that generate heat such as kilns or food preparation?

Exposure to heat generated solely from work processes or activities is not covered by H&SM Ch 24.

Is there any training available for those required to work in the heat?

HIPP training can be found in MyCareer@PCC. The titles of relevant courses are as follows: *Employee Training for Heat Illness Prevention* and *Manager Training for Heat Illness Prevention*.

Are there any online tools that can be used that can forecast apparent temperatures and provide guidance on understanding the risks associated with employees working outdoors during periods of high heat?

Managers of affected employees should download the free OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool app. When used with the resources in H&SM Ch 24, this app will allow managers to monitor apparent temperatures at any PCC campus or center and determine what the apparent temperature will be for up to 13 hours into the future.