

Heat Stress Monitoring Executive Summary

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has not established a specific regulation for Heat Stress. Citations can still be issued under the General Duty clause for failure to abate a recognized hazard. In those situations, the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) for Heat Stress are referenced as the source for determining if an un-controlled overexposure situation exists. If you have processes or tasks that may have significant exposures to Heat Stress, efforts should be made to determine the extent of heat exposures and possible improvement solutions. The following information has been provided to assist you with Heat Stress issues:

- Initial evaluations should be completed to determine Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) index values for comparison with the applicable ACGIH TLV.
- The appropriate workload category should be selected after reviewing tasks to determine the potential energy expenditure required to complete the task. Guidelines are available to assist with determination of the appropriate workload category.
- The appropriate Work-Rest Regimen should be selected after determining whether the work is continuous or intermittent. An intermittent Work-Rest regimen should be used if the rest portion of the work cycle is in an environment with an appreciable reduction in heat exposures. If not, the exposure is considered continuous even if the worker is idle with little energy expenditure.
- Allowances should be made for required protective clothing that impedes the loss of heat from the body.
- Consideration should be given to acclimatization when selecting an appropriate ACGIH TLV.

Heat related illnesses are progressive illnesses that can be effectively managed using a Heat Stress Program. Workers should be trained to recognize symptoms along with corrective actions needed to prevent progression to more serious heat illnesses. In addition to documenting exposures for comparison to the ACGIH TLVs, a thorough workplace evaluation can identify solutions to help you manage heat issues. In many instances, fans are used to provide air movement for cooling; however, when Dry Bulb temperatures exceed 95° F, movement of hot air can actually add to a person's heat load and exacerbate the heat problem. It is prudent to evaluate heat exposures to determine the most effective way to protect your workers from heat related illnesses.

Professional CorpOHS consultants are available to assist you with your Heat Stress monitoring needs. Please contact your account representative or call our office at 240-566-3068.