

HEATWAVE GUIDANCE

If you work indoors in an office/ council service or at home – what can you do to keep cool?

Keep the heat out

- Keep curtains on windows exposed to the sun closed while the temperature outside is higher than it is inside. Once the temperature outside has dropped lower than it is inside, open the windows.

Keep body temperature down

- Wear loose fitting cotton clothing
- Keep hydrated – drink plenty of water throughout the day
- Have cold food – salad and fruit for lunch
- If feeling particularly hot and uncomfortable sprinkle water on to clothes and face. A damp paper towel/ towel on the back of the neck can help regulate temperature.
- If going into the sun apply a min of SPF15 sunscreen (apply 20-30 minutes before going outside) on any exposed skin. You should take particular care if you have fair or freckled skin that doesn't tan, or goes red or burns before it tans; red or fair hair and light coloured eyes and a large number of moles.
- Water external and internal plants, and spray the ground outside windows with water (avoid creating slip hazards) to help cool the air

If you need to travel in vehicles

- Check coolant and oil levels before travelling to ensure they high and top up as necessary
- When driving at under 50 mph, turn the air conditioning right down or off, to save energy wasted by the engine. Lower speeds make the engine work harder to produce the cold air, which in extreme heats could cause a breakdown
- Check that you have breakdown cover
- Carry extra water with you in case you are stuck in traffic
- Try and park cars in the shade
- If available, use windscreen covers to reduce the sun shining directly onto vehicle controls

If you work outdoors - what can you do to protect yourself?

- Keep your top on – wear proper sun-protective clothing, such as long-sleeved tops and long trousers.
- KEEP YOUR PPE ON – HARD HATS AND HI-VIS JACKETS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES (as outlined in risk assessments)
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, during your breaks and especially at lunchtime.
- If it is safe to do so and it isn't breaching any site rules or risk assessment requirements, you can remove personal protective equipment during breaks to help encourage heat loss.
- Apply a min of SPF15 sunscreen (apply 20-30 minutes before going outside) on any exposed skin. You should take particular care if you have fair or freckled skin that doesn't tan, or goes red or burns before it tans; red or fair hair and light coloured eyes and a large number of moles.

- Drink plenty of water/ cool beverages to avoid dehydration. When working hard in heat employees should consume around 250 ml (half a pint) every 15 minutes or 500 ml (a pint) every 30 minutes.
- Managers will discuss with individual operational teams whether working times can be adjusted (if this is operationally possible) e.g. to commence earlier, start later or take breaks to avoid the mid-day sun.
- Keep an eye out for the early symptoms of heat stress and closely monitor and check on co-workers for signs of heat illness. Typical symptoms are:
 1. Unable to concentrate;
 2. Muscle cramps;
 3. Heat rash;
 4. Severe thirst - a late symptom of heat stress;
 5. Fainting;
 6. Heat exhaustion - fatigue, giddiness, nausea, headache, moist skin;
 7. Heatstroke - hot dry skin, confusion, convulsions and eventual loss of consciousness.

Useful links

[Temperature in the workplace: Heat stress - HSE](#)