Southern Oregon Construction Safety & Health Forum

2016 Summer

2nd Edition

AGC Oregon Columbia Chapter
ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS

It remains our mission for effective Safety & Health Program communication with AGC Members. With everyone's busy schedules it can be difficult to commit to meetings. This forum letter is intended to give us all opportunity to share information on current rules, conditions and changes that effect our Safety Cultures and our Communities. When you have information you are willing to share with Members, please contact me and we will ensure that information gets out for everyone's benefit. John Jean, AGC SMC johnj@agc-oregon.org (541) 613-6859

Protecting Workers from Heat Stress Disorders

Heat Illness Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided. There are precautions your employer should take any time temperatures are high and the job involves physical work.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness •High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind •Low liquid intake •Heavy physical labor •Waterproof clothing •No recent exposure to hot workplaces

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion •Headache, dizziness, or fainting •Weakness and wet skin •Irritability or confusion •Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke •May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits) •May stop sweating

To Prevent Heat Illness, Your Employer Should •Establish a complete heat illness prevention program. •Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them •Provide a lot of cool water to workers close to the work area. At least one pint of water per hour is needed •Modify work schedules and arrange frequent rest periods with water breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas •Gradually increase workloads and allow more frequent breaks for workers new to the heat or those that have been away from work to adapt to working in the heat (acclimatization) •Routinely check workers who are at risk of heat stress due to protective clothing and high temperature. •Consider protective clothing that provides cooling.

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others •Know signs/symptoms of heat illnesses; monitor yourself; use a buddy system. • Block out direct sun and other heat sources. • Drink plenty of fluids. Drink often and BEFORE you are thirsty. Drink water every 15 minutes. • Avoid beverages containing alcohol or caffeine. • Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes. What to Do When a Worker is Ill from the Heat • Call a supervisor for help. If the supervisor is not available, call 911. • Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives. • Move the worker to a cooler/shaded area. • Remove outer clothing. • Fan and mist the worker with water; apply ice (ice bags or ice towels). • Provide cool drinking water, if able to drink. ***IF THE WORKER IS NOT ALERT or seems confused***, this may be a heat stroke. ***CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY*** and apply ice as soon as possible.

Hydration Alert: Drink More Water

Not only is **water** a precious global resource, it is also the superhero of beverages – no question. Why? Because of the crazy amount of health benefits that come along with the clear, no-calorie liquid, making it essential to your health both on and off the job. And **water** can be taken in not just by drinking it – but from absorption through the food you eat as well.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reasons why **water**, plain and simple, should become your #1 drink:

Balance Out Your Body Fluids – At 60% **water**, your body uses these bodily fluids to help with digestion, absorption, circulation, saliva creation, nutrient transportation, and body temperature maintenance.

Control Those Calories – For years, dieters have been drinking lots of **water** as a weight loss strategy. While **water** doesn't have any magical effect on weight loss, substituting it for higher calorie beverages can certainly help.

Energize Your Muscles – Muscle fatigue occurs in cells that don't maintain their balance of fluids and electrolytes, which is why it is important to drink fluids when exercising. The American College of Sports Medicine guidelines recommend that people drink about 17 ounces of fluid about two hours before exercise and at regular intervals during the activity.

Keep Your Kidneys Happy – Adequate **water** intake allows your kidneys to do an amazing job of cleansing and ridding your body of waste products and toxins.

Need help to start drinking more water?

Have a beverage with every snack and meal. Beverages such as milk and juice are composed mostly of **water**. **Water** is still your best bet because it's calorie-free, inexpensive, and readily available.

Choose beverages that meet your individual needs; you're likely to drink more liquids if you like the way they taste, and if you're watching calories, go for non-caloric beverages or **water**.

Eat more fruits and vegetables. Their high **water** content will add to your hydration. About 20% of our fluid intake comes from foods. For example, many fruits and vegetables, such as watermelon and spinach, are 90 percent or more **water** by weight. **Keep a bottle of water with you** in your car, at your desk, or in your bag.