TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-HEA · Working in Heat Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: All workers · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 8 November 2026

For workers outdoors or in hot indoor environments: how heat illness develops, the controls that prevent it, and how to recognise heat stroke.

Working in heat can cause heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which can be fatal. It also makes people tired, slows decisions and increases the chance of other incidents. The risk depends on more than the air temperature: humidity, radiant heat, air movement, how hard the work is, clothing and whether workers are used to the heat all matter.

This talk covers the factors that create heat stress, the controls the business uses such as scheduling, shade, water, rest and acclimatisation, the signs of heat illness, and what to do when someone shows them.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Explain the factors that create heat stress: temperature, humidity, radiant heat, air movement, workload, clothing and acclimatisation
- Describe controls such as rescheduling work, shade, cooling, mechanical aids, rest breaks and water
- Explain why new and returning workers need time to acclimatise
- Recognise the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- Respond to heat illness: move the person somewhere cool, cool them, give water if they are alert, and call triple zero (000) for heat stroke
- Look out for each other, and stop work and report when controls are not enough

What it covers

Module	Covers
How heat harms	Heat stress and heat illness; The factors that matter; Who is at greater risk
Controls	Scheduling and rotating work; Shade, cooling and ventilation; Water and rest breaks; Acclimatisation
Recognise and respond	Heat cramps, exhaustion and stroke; First response; Buddy checks and reporting

Activities

- What makes it hot: workers rate the heat risk of three jobs using the handout factor list
- Heat stroke response: a short scenario worked through step by step

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What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

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TOOLBOX TALK

Working in Heat Awareness

How heat illness develops, the controls that prevent it, and how to recognise heat stroke

20–30 minutes · All workers

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

HEA

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What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ How heat harms, and the factors that matter
- ✓ Controls that prevent heat illness
- ✓ Acclimatisation
- ✓ Recognising and responding to heat illness

This talk is not

- ✕ First aid training
- ✕ A heat stress measurement or assessment
- ✕ Medical advice about you
- ✕ Our plan: **[Our heat plan]**

Awareness only. It is not first aid training. First aiders need a current first aid qualification.

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How heat harms

Heat stress is the heat load on the body. When the body cannot get rid of heat fast enough, heat illness follows.

- Heat rash and heat cramps: early warnings
- Heat exhaustion: heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea, weakness
- Heat stroke: the body's cooling fails. A medical emergency that can kill
- Before illness: tiredness, slower decisions, sweaty hands, short tempers, more incidents

A composite example

- A labourer in a second week on the job is shovelling on a still, humid afternoon. The water cooler is at the site shed, a long walk away.
- By mid-afternoon they are confused and stumbling. Nobody had planned for the heat.

Heat illness creeps up. Heat stroke can kill.

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The factors that matter

The conditions

- Air temperature
- Humidity: sweat cannot evaporate to cool you
- Radiant heat: direct sun, hot roofs and surfaces, furnaces, ovens
- Air movement: still air cools less
- Hot days in a row: the body does not recover overnight

The work and the person

- Workload: heavy or fast work makes more body heat
- Clothing and PPE that trap heat
- Acclimatisation: new and returning workers are at greater risk
- Greater risk too: being unwell, dehydrated, some medications, a past heat illness
- Alcohol the night before, poor sleep, low fitness

A 30 degree day can be more dangerous than a 38 degree day.

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Duties under WHS or OHS laws

The business must

- Manage the risk of heat, using the order of controls
- Provide shade, cool drinking water, rest areas and amenities
- Plan work for hot conditions, including acclimatisation
- Have first aid and emergency arrangements, and consult workers

You must

- Use the controls: water, shade, breaks, cooling
- Tell your supervisor if you are new to the heat, unwell or struggling
- Look out for your workmates
- Stop and report when controls are not enough

WHS and OHS laws set no single maximum temperature. Victoria's rules take their own form. Check yours.

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TOOLBOX TALK · HAZ-HEA

Working in Heat Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

Working in heat can cause heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which can kill. Heat also causes tiredness, poor decisions and other incidents. Keep this page.

What makes it hot: the factor list

- ☐ Air temperature: how hot is it?
- ☐ Humidity: is it sticky, so sweat does not dry?
- ☐ Radiant heat: sun, hot roofs, plant, ovens, furnaces?
- ☐ Air movement: is there a breeze or fan, or is it still?
- ☐ Workload: how hard is the work, and for how long?
- ☐ Clothing and PPE: heavy, dark, or impermeable?
- ☐ Acclimatisation: is anyone new or returning?
- ☐ The person: unwell, tired, or on some medications?

Controls

- Hot, heavy work in cooler parts of the day; rotate
- Shade, ventilation, fans; aids to cut effort
- Cool water close by: small amounts often
- Rest breaks in cool shade, more as it gets hotter
- New or returning? Build up over one to two weeks

Where

- Water and shade: **[Where water, shade and cooling are here]**
- First aid: **[First aider and nearest first aid here]**

Recognise it

- Heat cramps: painful muscle cramps
- Heat exhaustion: heavy sweating, pale clammy skin, dizziness, nausea, weakness, fainting
- Heat stroke: confusion, slurred speech, collapse, seizures, very hot skin

Respond

1. Stop work; move them somewhere cool and shaded; stay with them
2. Heat stroke signs? Call triple zero (000) now
3. Cool them: remove extra clothing, wet the skin and fan, cold packs to neck, armpits and groin
4. Sips of cool water only if fully alert
5. Get the first aider, and report it

Stop and report when

- There is no water, shade or rest area
- You or a workmate feel unwell
- Someone is confused or stumbling
- Report to: **[Who to report to here]**

Plan for the heat, and look out for each other. Confused or collapsed? Call 000 and cool them.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It is not first aid training.

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