

# Hot Topic



## Heat Exhaustion & Safety clothing during hot weather

We are currently experiencing a period of very hot weather which is forecast to continue through August 2019.

The heat presents its own unique challenges, especially for those colleagues working outdoors and undertaking physically strenuous work. It is easy to suffer with heat exhaustion or heat stroke without being aware of it.

Signs to look out for include:

- headache
- dizziness and confusion
- loss of appetite and feeling sick
- excessive sweating and pale, clammy skin
- fast breathing or pulse
- cramps in the arms, legs and stomach
- being very thirsty

It is important to look out for these signs in ourselves and our colleagues and take proactive action to minimise the risk of it occurring.

This can include:

- drinking plenty of water
- work in the shade where possible
- improving ventilation in the work area
- take more frequent rest breaks
- share strenuous tasks between colleagues

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Recent incidents have shown what a critical role safety clothing plays in preventing serious harm.

With P.P.E having to be worn, requirements cannot be relaxed in periods of hot weather.

Where working outside of operations conditions, that enforced protective clothing must be worn, colleagues can opt to wear other approved workwear that is more suited to the conditions, whilst still managing the risks associated with the work they are doing.

If you are working in accordance with regulations and begin to feel unwell, temporarily cease work and take measures to alleviate and recover the situation. This might include:

- Leaving an overly hot working area / enclosed space or direct sunlight to get some fresh / cool air and a drink.
- Removing clothing layers under P.P.E or swapping them for lighter materials.

Seek medical advise if you have any of the effects mentioned, as in some cases it may save your life.

**We make more mistakes when hot and tired**

**Look after yourself and colleagues**

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