

SALTIRE
SAFETY



Working in the Sun

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Introduction:

Working in the sun can be both rewarding and challenging. While it offers the opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors, it also exposes you to potential risks associated with prolonged sun exposure. It's crucial to prioritise your safety and take proactive measures to protect yourself from the harmful effects of the sun. In this blog, we'll discuss essential tips and precautions for staying safe when working in the sun.

1. Apply Sunscreen:

One of the most critical steps in sun safety is applying sunscreen with a high SPF (Sun Protection Factor) before heading outdoors. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Remember to reapply every two hours, especially if you're sweating or working near water. Don't forget to cover often overlooked areas like your ears, neck, and the back of your hands.

2. Dress Appropriately:

Wearing appropriate clothing can significantly reduce your sun exposure. Opt for lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that covers your arms and legs. Long-sleeved shirts and pants made of tightly woven fabrics provide better protection. Additionally, wearing a wide-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses can shield your face, neck, and eyes from the sun's harmful rays.

3. Seek Shade:

Whenever possible, take breaks in shaded areas to give your body a break from direct sunlight. If shade isn't readily available, consider creating your own shade using an umbrella or canopy. Taking regular breaks in shaded areas can help prevent heat-related illnesses and reduce the risk of sunburn.

4. Stay Hydrated:

Working in the sun can cause excessive sweating and dehydration. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid excessive consumption of caffeine or sugary drinks as they can further dehydrate your body. Aim to drink water even before you feel thirsty to maintain optimal hydration levels.

5. Time Your Work:

Plan your work schedule to avoid peak sun hours, typically between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest. Whenever possible, schedule outdoor tasks for early morning or late afternoon when the temperature and UV exposure are relatively lower. Adjusting your work schedule can significantly reduce your sun exposure and lower the risk of sunburn or heat-related illnesses.

6. Use Protective Equipment:

In addition to sunscreen and appropriate clothing, consider using additional protective equipment. Utilise wide-brimmed hard hats or attach a brim to your existing hard hat for added sun protection. Use sun-protective sleeves or cooling towels to protect your arms and keep yourself cool. Employing these additional protective measures can significantly enhance your sun safety.

7. Educate Yourself:

Learn about the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Familiarise yourself with the precautions to take if you or a coworker experience any of these conditions. Knowing the early warning signs and appropriate actions can help prevent serious health complications and even save lives.

8. Promote a Sun-Safe Workplace Culture:

Encourage your colleagues and employers to prioritise sun safety. Advocate for the availability of shaded rest areas, provide training on sun safety, and promote the use

of sun-protective equipment. By fostering a sun-safe workplace culture, you can ensure the well-being of yourself and your coworkers.

Conclusion:

Working in the sun doesn't mean compromising your safety. By following these essential sun safety tips, you can minimise the risks associated with prolonged sun exposure and enjoy a safer and healthier outdoor working experience. Remember, protecting yourself from the sun's harmful rays is not only a short-term concern but also a long-term investment in your overall health and well-being. Stay sun-safe and take care!

