

BEAT THE HEAT: DON'T LET THE HEAT BEAT YOU

Even smaller increases in periods of hot weather above the norm results in increases in hospital admissions for respiratory, heart, and kidney –related illness. Rhode Islanders are more likely to seek emergency care and die on days hotter than 80 degrees, according to Brown University researchers. The researchers found the yearly total is increasing; and they project that if days became 10 degrees hotter by the end of the century, the state would see about 80 more deaths each summer and the rate of heat-related emergency department visits would increase by about 25 percent (from about 6,000 to about 7,500 each summer).

Some Elements of Heat-Healthy Program for Workers:

- *Download on Iphone OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool. [Real-time heat index and hourly forecasts, specific to your location, with safety recommendations from OSHA/ NIOSH.]*
- *Regular hydration (fluid intake) is vital.*
- *But water and sports drink intake alone will not prevent heat illnesses. It is also important to adjust the work environment and regimen.*
- *Take frequent rest breaks. If you work outdoors try to take these breaks inside or in a cool shaded area. The hotter it gets, take more and longer breaks.*
- *Schedule heavy work at cooler times.*
- *Workers and staff should have time to adjust to hot environments.*
- *Shield machinery or equipment that produces heat.*
- *Supply portable general ventilation and spot cooling in hot work areas.*
- *Providing cooling protective clothing (e.g., water-cooled garments, air-cooled garments, cooling vests, and wetted overgarments).*
- *Eat smaller meals and avoid sugar, caffeinated drinks, and alcohol.*
- *Provide training and select a crew or staff member for specific emergency medical training on how to handle a victim of heat stroke.*
- *Review hazards and precautions when a heat wave is predicted.*



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