SUN AND HYDRATION

When working outside, the effects of the weather can have a serious impact on an employee's health if the risks have not been considered or properly managed. The effects can be immediate or it can occur over a long period of time.

Working in the sun

Too much sunlight is harmful to your skin. It can cause skin damage in the form of sunburn, blisters, and in the long term can lead to an increased risk of skin cancer. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the UK with over 50,000 cases each year. A tan is the sign that the skin has been damaged.

Who is at risk?

If your work is predominately outside your skin will be exposed to more sun than is healthy for you. You should take particular care if you have;

- Fair or freckled skin
- Red/fair hair
- A large number of moles
- Skin that burns easily

Hot environments

- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day
- Provide more frequent rest breaks in shaded areas
- Access to free cold drinking water
- Encourage the removal of PPE during break times to promote heat dissipation
- Recognise the signs of heat stress

Hydration

It is well documented that keeping fully hydrated is paramount to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Water makes up around 60% of our body, with every system reliant on it, therefore making sure that you consume enough fluid is essential for staying hydrated and healthy, especially as the weather gets warmer. Being just 2% dehydrated can cause fatigue, tiredness and impaired physiological and psychological performance. Being 10% dehydrated (severe) can cause much more serious issues such as circulatory collapse and heat stroke.

Symptoms of dehydration

- Dizziness
- Dry mouth
- Lack of Sweat
- Irritability
- Fatigue and lethargy
- Dark Yellow urine
- Lack of urine for 12 hours
- Tearless crying
- Sunken eyes

If you feel thirsty, you are already mildly dehydrated. Relying on thirst as a reminder to take a drink leaves you at risk of dehydration. The amount you need to drink depends on how much you sweat, the duration and intensity of exercise, fitness level, environment, genetics, size and gender. During exercise, you can lose up to one litre an hour of fluid, mainly through sweating and breathing, so it is important to hydrate, during and after exercise. Staying hydrated in hot weather can help reduce the risk of heat related illness: -

- Keep water on hand
- Try to stay in a shaded area during the hottest part of the afternoon
- Avoid strenuous activity during peak sun hours
- Look for shade and take additional breaks
- Seek medical attention immediately for any signs of heat-related illness

Remember to drink plenty of water on warmer days to avoid dehydration.

1. Cover up

2. Protect your head

3. Seek shade

4. Use sunscreen

5. Be skin safe

Summer Working:

Monitoring your urine

Drink a little water every 15 minutes, keep hydrated and check your urine throughout the day.

Doing OK. You're probably well hydrated. Drink water as normal.

You're just fine. You could stand to drink a little water now, maybe a small glass of water.

Drink about 1/2 a bottle of water(1/4 litre) within the hour, or drink a whole bottle (1/2 litre) of water if you're outside and/or sweating.

Drink about 1/2 bottle of water (1/4 litre) right now, or drink a whole bottle (1/2 litre) of water if you're outside and/or sweating.

Drink 2 bottles of water right now (1 litre). if your urine is darker than this and/or red or brown, then dehydration may not be your problem . See a doctor.

It's important to note that some medication, vitamin supplements and food can alter the colour of your urine.

Keeping hydrated: Water is best, but you can include the rest!

Hot drinks, as well as cold will help to keep you hydrated. Tea will help, but a cold beer and other alcohol will dehydrate you.

For further information on dehydration, visit:
http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Dehydration/Pages/Prevention.aspx

BRIEFING ATTENDANCE HOT WEATHER WORKING

Given by		*Signature*	
Site Location		*Date*	
Start Time		*Finish Time*	

I HAVE READ OR HAVE BEEN BRIEFED AND UNDERSTAND THE BRIEFING THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME

Name	*Position*	*Date*	*Signature*

Return to Training Dept.
Training Department Action

Recorded ☐ Training Matrix ☐ Documents Filed ☐ Date: .....