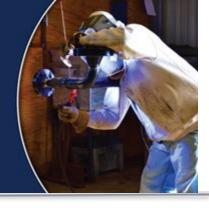


HSE HEALTH SAFETY ENVIRONMENTAL



Alert #: SA 25-25 Date: July 2, 2025

Often Overlooked Causes of Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion can sneak up on workers—even when they think they're doing everything right. Beyond direct sunlight and high temps, there are hidden factors that can put people at risk. Let's talk about those.

Less Obvious Causes to Watch Out For:

1. Poor Hydration the Day Before

- ➤ You can't "catch up" on water during the
- ➤ Start hydrating the night before a hot day.

2. Caffeine & Energy Drinks

- ➤ Diuretics (like coffee or energy drinks) increase fluid loss.
- ➤ These can worsen dehydration quickly.

3. High Humidity

- ➤ Sweat won't evaporate to cool you off when
- ➤ You may not feel as sweaty but still overheat 7. Working Near Hot Equipment

4. Overdressing or Wrong PPE Choices

- ➤ non-breathable clothing or dark colors trap
- ➤ Use the *lightest* and *most breathable* PPE allowed.

5. Skipping Breaks or Pushing **Through**

- ➤ Heat exhaustion often starts with fatigue and dizziness.
- ➤ Rest breaks in shaded/cool areas are not optional—they're protective.

6. Medications or Health Conditions

- ➤ Blood pressure meds, heart issues, or past heat illness can raise your risk.
- ➤ Be aware if you or a coworker has higher susceptibility.

- ➤ Prolonged exposure to hot equipment can cause sweating, fatigue, and dehydration.
- ➤ Even in cooler times of the year, hot equipment can still cause heat exhaustion.

Prevention Tips

- **Hydrate**: Drink water every 15–20 minutes, not just when thirsty.
- Acclimate: Gradually increase heat exposure over time.
- Monitor: Watch out for symptoms like confusion, dizziness, headache, nausea, and fatigue.
- **Buddy System**: Always check on each other—especially in the heat.

If You Suspect Heat Exhaustion:

- Move the person to shade or AC.
- Give cool water (if conscious).
- Loosen clothing.
- Use cool compresses.
- Call for medical help if symptoms worsen or don't improve.



Working in the heat doesn't have to be dangerous—but ignoring the small stuff can add up fast. Stay sharp. Stay hydrated. Stay cool.

