



Hot weather guidance for managers

1. Seasonal hot weather conditions can make employees feel uncomfortable. In some circumstances, they can also impact on their health, safety and wellbeing.
2. Periods of very high temperatures occur most, but not all, years although they vary greatly in length and intensity. This means you need to include hot weather and other thermal hazards as part of the general health and safety risk assessments you complete for your service. If you manage outdoor workers this is particularly important. Be aware of situations where overheating could potentially increase work-related risks. This might include heat stress and dehydration increasing the risks to lone workers and staff using machinery or transport.
3. Here are some practical tips to help managers protect their staff...

All workers

4. You can:
 - introduce working arrangements to limit exposure to the heat. This might include job rotation, scheduling intensive tasks or 'hot' work early in the day when it's cooler, changing working hours or encouraging staff to use flexible working arrangements to help avoid working in high temperatures
 - make sure staff take enough breaks to get a drink and cool down
 - be supportive if individuals need additional breaks while temperatures are high - some people can't tolerate the heat as well as others. Bear in mind that health conditions and medication may have an impact too. Make sure they feel able to talk to you about any concerns or adjustments they may need.
 - relax formal dress codes or uniform requirements, providing this doesn't compromise health and safety for footwear or protective clothing
 - remind your staff how important it is to stay well hydrated and make sure they have ready access to fresh drinking water
 - make sure hot pipes, metallic surfaces and equipment are insulated (where possible). These could be part of heating systems or on vehicles and work equipment.
 - make sure everyone looks out for signs of heat stress in their colleagues and knows what to do if they have any concerns
 - include discussions about hot weather arrangements in your team meetings, toolbox talks or one to one meetings. Timetable this in for late spring every year, so everyone is prepared.
 - encourage workers to keep covered up when out in the sun, especially at lunch time.

People who work outside

5. If you manage people who work outside for long periods, you need to consider the risks from ultraviolet, UV, radiation from the sun. UV radiation can cause sunburn, blistering, skin ageing and in the long term can lead to skin cancer. People with pale skin are most at risk of skin damage, especially those with fair or red hair, lots of freckles or a family history of skin cancer. People of all skin colours can suffer from overheating and dehydration.
6. You can help by:
 - considering alternative work schedules, where possible, to minimise sun exposure
 - checking that welfare facilities are readily available and staff get chance to use them. Make sure suitable arrangements are in place for mobile workers.
 - encouraging workers to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. If necessary, arrange for water to be taken out to mobile workers.
 - making sure that if staff have to wear uniforms then appropriate options are available for summer weather. These should be loose fitting, light coloured and made of breathable fabrics like cotton.
 - encouraging workers to take their breaks in the shade, rather than staying out in the sun. Site water points and rest areas in the shade
 - including sun protection advice and information in health and safety, (H&S) training. You can use the resources listed at the end of this document.
 - encouraging staff to use a sunscreen of at least **Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30** on any part of the body they can't cover up. Remind them to follow the manufacturer's instructions and apply it regularly
 - encouraging workers to check their skin regularly for unusual spots or moles that change size, shape or colour. Remind them that a tan isn't healthy, but a sign that their skin has already been damaged. Advise them to get medical advice straightaway if they have any concerns.
 - choosing shaded locations for staff running outside events or campaigns, or providing sun brollies or temporary gazebos for them.

Indoor workers

7. You can:
 - turn off heating systems and unnecessary equipment that could increase indoor temperatures
 - shade employees from direct sunlight with blinds to reduce the heating effects of the sun
 - site workstations away from direct sunlight or heat-radiating equipment
 - make sure windows can be opened (where building design makes this possible)
 - try to make sure windows are open and blinds are down from early in the day to prevent heat building up - it's too late once people feel hot!

Thermal comfort risk assessments

8. You need to find out if thermal comfort factors, such as heat and humidity, are a risk to your employees. If they're complaining of problems, you need to take action...
- Check out our Thermal Comfort at Work Guide for more information.
 - Get advice from the Health and Safety Team (HST).
 - Monitor thermal conditions and record your findings.
 - Do a thermal comfort risk assessment in consultation with your staff and their H&S representatives. Develop, implement and publicise agreed control measures.
 - Review control measures and work practices to check staff are protected.
 - Make sure staff are trained to appreciate the risks of thermal discomfort and the measures in place to protect them.
 - Encourage staff to tell you if they have special needs or are vulnerable to thermal hazards. This might be because of pregnancy, ill health, medical conditions or prescribed medication. Get expert advice from Occupational Health if you need it.
 - Check that staff are appropriately supervised. Make sure lone workers aren't at increased risk from thermal hazards.
 - Set up contingency plans for dealing with unexpected situations, such as heatwave conditions, equipment breakdowns, or similar emergencies.

NHS Heatwave Plan for England

9. The Plan outlines what needs to happen to protect at-risk groups both before and during a severe heatwave. It includes specific responsibilities for local authorities, particularly for health and social care services. Directorate-specific arrangements should be in place to cover this. If you're unsure, check with your manager. You can download the [current full plan](#) from the Department of Health website.

Sources of information

10. You can get more advice and information from:
- the **Health and Safety Team** (HST) by calling 01332 **640748**, or emailing employee.healthandsafety@derby.gov.uk
 - **Occupational Health** by calling 01332 **640543**, or emailing occupational.healthservice@derby.gov.uk.
 - the Occupational Health and Safety pages on [iDerby](#) and the [Schools' Information Portal](#)
 - the **Health and Safety Executive's** [thermal comfort](#) web pages and ['Keep your top on: Health risks from working in the sun'](#) leaflet
 - **Cancer Research UK's** [Sun, UV and Cancer](#) web pages.