



July 2016

Beat the Summer Heat

by BHS

Heat and humidity can cause several different types of heat-related illnesses including heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Knowing the signs and symptoms of each type of illness will help to keep your guests and staff safe through the summer season.

Normally, the body has ways of keeping itself cool by allowing heat to escape through the skin and evaporating perspiration. (The human body cools itself through perspiration when the water in sweat evaporates and carries heat away from the body.) However, if the body does not cool down properly or does not cool down enough, a person may suffer a heat-related illness. Anyone is susceptible to a heat-related illness, but the very young and elderly are at the greatest risk. Heat-related illnesses can become serious or even deadly if unattended.

Types of Heat-related Emergencies

These are three types of heat-related emergencies:

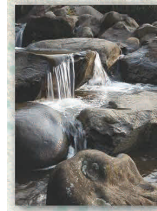
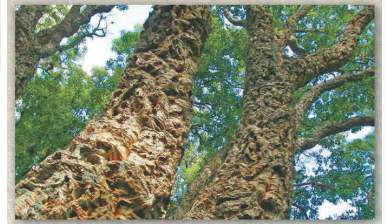
- **Heat Cramps** are muscular pains and spasms caused by heavy exertion. This is generally the result of a loss of water and salt through perspiration.
- **Heat Exhaustion** is caused by fluid loss and decreased blood flow to your vital organs. This condition can produce flu-like symptoms.
- **Heat Stroke** is the most serious heat-related emergency and occurs when the body's internal cooling system has failed. This is a life-threatening condition requiring immediate and aggressive action.

[This heat-related emergency guide](#) provides information about the various signs and symptoms of the three main types of heat-related illnesses and how they should be treated.

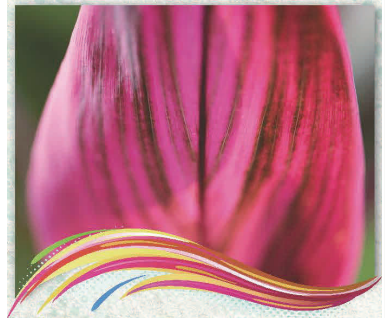
The Heat Index

The heat index is a method that combines air temperature and relative humidity to determine an apparent temperature or in other words, how hot it actually feels outside.

However, when the relative humidity is high, the evaporation rate of the perspiration and the body's normal cooling process is reduced. This means that heat is removed from the body at a lower rate, causing greater heat retentions than in dry air. The heat index is important to



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track especially when staff is completing physical work outdoors, as higher combinations of heat and humidity can make the body more susceptible to heat-related illnesses.

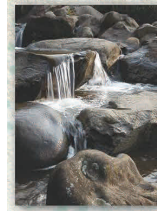
Preventing Heat Related Emergencies

Follow these preventative tips for various types of heat-related illnesses:

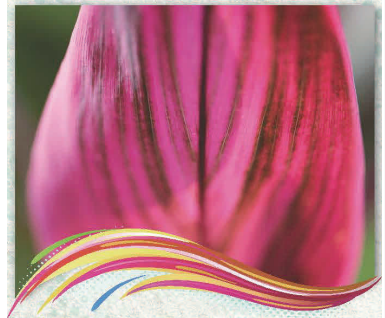
- If working outdoors, avoid long periods of direct sunlight.
- Take shorter more frequent breaks in the shade.
- Wear a hat to shade your face.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothes.
- Drink primarily non-caffeinated fluids. Caffeine actually works against you because it is a diuretic and will cause you to lose more fluids than you are ingesting. Drinking water or other electrolyte products are best.
- Never wait until you feel thirsty to start hydrating – you are well on your way to becoming dehydrated when you feel thirsty. It is critical to your overall health to stay properly hydrated, when working in hot and humid environments.
- Allow new workers, seasonal workers or people returning from a week away time to acclimate to working in the heat (shorter periods and more frequent breaks).
- Keep an eye on your fellow workers.
- Provide water sources in outlying areas of your public garden.

If you need further information about safety, risk management or insurance for your public garden, we are here to assist.

Sharon & Kim



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