



# VA Heat Stress Advisory Committee Work Group #3

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# Questions and Issues

- 1) Rest Break schedules
- 2) Radiant Heat, Work Load and Clothing Risk Factors
- 3) Extreme Heat Category?
- 4) Electrolyte provision?
- 5) Shade- Air Conditioned Cabs?
- 6) Remote work- Measurement of heat and humidity in remote locations, Emergencies
- 7) Air-conditioning – non-work exposures?
- 8) Rest breaks for recovery vs. prevention
- 9) Acclimatization- should there be a schedule?
- 10) Non-English speakers- Emergency plans, training

# Rest Break Schedules

- ▶ The draft requires a 10 minute rest break every 2 hours in high heat situations
- ▶ It was suggested that this may be insufficient.
  - ▶ One proposal was for a break every two hours between 80 and 90 and a break every hour in high heat situations
  - ▶ Is 10 minutes enough?

# Radiant heat, Work Load, Clothing

- ▶ Radiant heat, work load and clothing add significantly to body heat burden
- ▶ Yet, they aren't really addressed in the draft.
- ▶ One suggestion was that if exposed between 80 and 90 and you have any of these additional exposures you fall in the "high heat" category and thus more precautions are taken (e.g. more rest breaks, closer monitoring, etc.)
- ▶ Alternatives would be to add several degrees (based on the risk factor) to the heat index to better estimate exposure
- ▶ Definitions would have to be added for work loads

# Extreme Heat Category

- ▶ Should there be an “extreme heat” category, e.g. exposures over 100 Heat Index?
- ▶ At some point exposures are so hot that a work-rest schedule like 15 min work/45 min rest must be imposed which practically speaking means not much work can get done. Should work be stopped above a certain temperature?

# Electrolytes

- ▶ Replacing water lost to sweating is critical but so is replacing electrolytes
- ▶ We suggested a provision from an ANSI standard for construction being drafted now that requires provisions of electrolytes as well.

# Air-conditioned cabs

- ▶ The question came up if air-conditioned cabs can be used as cool down areas, particularly in remote locations
- ▶ Air-conditioned cabs could be considered cool down areas, as long as there are not restrictions on idling and radiant heat is reduced in the cab but window shades/screens

# Remote Work

- ▶ Remote work poses additional challenges
- ▶ How does one measure temperature/humidity without internet access?
- ▶ Small hand held temperature and humidity meters are available for \$20-30
- ▶ How do we contact emergency services in remote locations?



# Air-conditioning- Non-work exposures

- ▶ Some workers, like farm workers, may be provided housing by their employer
- ▶ Should the employer then be required to provide air-conditioning during those non-work hours to allow workers to recover from heat exposures at work?

# Rest breaks- recovery vs prevention

- ▶ Are rest breaks to recover from heat illness different from those to prevent heat illness?
- ▶ Should they be distinguished with separate requirements?

# Acclimatization

- ▶ The greatest risk of heat illness occurs in the first few days on the job
- ▶ Acclimatization is required in section 60 but the requirement is non-specific
- ▶ Should a schedule be required? Should guidance be included in the appendix?

# Non-English speakers

- ▶ Requirements should be included for:
  - ▶ Training non-English speakers in their own language and
  - ▶ Communicating with non-English speakers in an emergency