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Heat Illness Prevention Plan

The Visalia Unified School District is committed to the protection of its employees and the prevention of heat related illness. For this purpose, the following **Heat Illness Prevention Plan** was developed outlining guidelines and procedures aimed at reducing the risk of heat related illness and properly responding when heat related illness occurs.

This plan was written in accordance with CalOSHA heat illness safety standards, and includes the required key elements of: **drinking water provisions, access to shade, written procedures, and training.**

The plan outlines the basics for most outdoor work environments and is vital to reducing incidence of heat related illnesses. However, in working environments with a higher risk for heat illness or during a heat wave, it's imperative to exercise even greater caution. Implementing additional protective measures, beyond what is listed in this plan, may be necessary to protect higher risk employees. As the risk for heat illness increases, so must the preventative measures.

Plan Location

The Visalia Unified School District's **Heat Illness Prevention Plan** is included as an **appendix to the Injury & Illness Prevention Program (IIPP)**. The Heat Illness Prevention Plan and the IIPP are available on VUSD's intranet and at Risk Management. The documents are available for review during normal business hours. Your supervisor or manager can provide you with the document location nearest to your work area.

Plan Administration & Responsibility

Employees will be responsible for:

- complying with the procedures and actions outlined in this plan
- reporting potential heat illness situations immediately

Supervisors, managers, and other department designated personnel will be responsible for:

- implementing and complying with the plan
- training, documentation of training, and making the written plan available to employees

- increasing preventative measures as necessitated by the dept/division's specific risks
- adding and updating dept/division specific information or procedures

Risk Management staff will be responsible for:

- developing, maintaining, reviewing, and updating general plan guidelines and procedures
- developing and providing relevant training material
- providing compliance assistance to supervisors/managers upon request and evaluating suggestions for improvements. Contact: Risk Management, 730-7538

Drinking Water

Water is a key preventive measure in minimizing the risk of heat related illnesses. In accordance with OSHA heat illness standards, the following steps shall be taken to ensure access to sufficient quantities of drinking water and to encourage frequent drinking of water:

Where the supply of water is not plumbed or otherwise continuously supplied, supervisors (or designated persons) shall provide, in a container or bottled, at least 1 quart of drinking water per employee per hour. Water shall be provided in sufficient quantities at the beginning of and throughout the shift.

Supervisors (or designated persons) shall frequently monitor water containers to ensure an adequate and palatable drinking water supply.

Employees are encouraged to report low water supply levels, water that is too warm, and/or dirty water to their supervisor (or designated persons).

Efforts shall be taken to replenish drinking water supplies, before levels fall below 50%. Effective replenishment is necessary to ensure access and encourage employees to drink plenty of water. Unintentional rationing may begin, if water supplies are low or are perceived to be insufficient.

When temperatures are predicted to be above 85 F degrees, supervisors (or designated persons) shall remind employees at the beginning of and periodically throughout the shift about the importance of frequent water consumption.

Mini-breaks, for the purpose of water consumption, shall be provided.

Since ease of access is key to frequent consumption, water containers or bottled water shall be placed as close as possible to where employees are working.

Disposable, single use drinking cups shall be provided to employees, unless personal bottled water is provided.

Access to Shade

Access to shade or other cooling measures and the ability to utilize recovery periods are important preventive steps in minimizing the risk of heat related illnesses. In accordance with OSHA heat illness standards, the following steps will be taken to ensure that employees have access to shade and preventative recovery period(s) as needed:

Supervisors (or designated persons) will ensure appropriate shade is available to employees, as needed. When shade is not readily available, an adequate number of umbrellas, canopies or other portable devices will be set-up for employees to use. Shade equipment shall be placed in close proximity (i.e., no more than 50-100 yards) to the work activity.

Cooling measures other than shade, such as misting machines or vehicle air conditioning may be provided in lieu of shade if these measures are **at least** as effective as shade in allowing employees to cool.

Employees suffering from symptoms of heat illness or those believing a preventative recovery period is needed shall be provided with access to air conditioning or an area of shade open to the air for a period of **no less than five minutes**.

When temperatures are predicted to be above 80 F degrees, supervisors (or designated persons) shall remind employees about the importance of rest breaks and the location of shade.

Written Procedures

Written procedures help reduce the risk of heat related illnesses, and ensure that emergency assistance is provided without delay. In accordance with OSHA heat illness standards, the following steps will be taken to reduce the risk of heat-related illness, respond to possible symptoms of heat-related illness, and ensure that emergency medical services are provided without delay:

- All employees will be trained.
- When a modified or shorter work-shift is not possible, more water and rest breaks will be provided.
- When feasible, working hours shall be modified to work during the cooler hours of the day.
- Supervisors (or designated persons) shall be trained to recognize symptoms of heat related illness and shall monitor assigned employees, staying alert to the presence of heat related symptoms.
- First aid and/or immediate medical attention shall be provided to employees suffering from heat-related symptoms **without delay**, including emergency medical services.

- Supervisors (or designated persons) shall carry cell phones or have access to other communication devices to ensure that emergency medical services can be called immediately, if/when needed. Devices shall be checked at the worksite prior to each shift to ensure they are working properly.
- Supervisors (or designated persons) shall routinely review emergency procedures with employees, including the work site address and/or a clear precise work site location to assist emergency personnel when responding.

Training

Training is critical in reducing the risk of heat related illnesses and in obtaining emergency assistance without delay. In accordance with OSHA heat illness standards, the following steps will be taken to ensure employees and supervisors are properly trained:

All employees working in outdoor environments shall receive training on the Heat Illness Prevention Plan upon hire or transfer, plan implementation, and annually. Training will include the following:

- Environmental and personal risk factors for dept/division employees
- VUSD's Heat Illness Prevention Plan and its procedures
- Importance of drinking adequate quantities of water frequently throughout the day.
- Importance of acclimatization (allowing the body to adjust gradually to the work in high heat)
- Types of heat illness and the signs and symptoms
- Importance of seeking first aid and/or emergency medical attention **without delay**

Training will be provided by supervisor (or designated persons) using demonstrations, pamphlets, handouts, or other methods deemed effective for employee comprehension and retention.

Training will be documented by employees' supervisors (or designated persons) utilizing meeting sign-in sheets and safety training logs maintained by each department.