

Summer Safety for Outdoor Workers

Protect yourself against the sun, heat and bugs

Since you're an outdoor worker, it is important to take precautions against exposure to sun, heat and bug bites during the summer months. Be safe and healthy on the job with these tips provided by Employer Resources Northwest.

Sun

To protect against the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, do the following:

- Cover up with lightweight, tightly woven clothing that you can't see through.
- Use sunscreen. A sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 blocks 93 percent of UV rays. Be sure to follow application directions.
- Wear a hat that protects your neck, ears, forehead, nose and scalp.
- Wear UV-absorbent shades, and make sure they block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation before purchasing them.

Heat

The combination of heat and humidity can be a serious health threat during the summer, especially when performing strenuous work. To beat the heat:

- Drink plenty of water before you get thirsty.
- Wear light, loose-fitting, breathable clothing such as dry-fit material.
- Eat smaller meals before working.
- Skip the caffeine and soda; drink water instead.
- Be aware that equipment such as respirators or work suits can increase heat stress.

Ticks

If you're working in tall grass or wooded areas, take the following precautions to protect yourself from ticks:

- Wear light-colored clothing to see ticks more easily.
- Wear long sleeves and long pants.
- Tuck pant legs into socks or boots.
- Wear high boots or closed shoes that cover your feet completely.
- Wear a hat.
- Use tick repellants.
- Wash and dry your work clothes at high temperatures.

Examine your body for ticks after work. Remove any attached ticks promptly with a tweezers. In some regions, ticks may transmit Lyme disease. If you get bit and develop a rash, see your doctor.

Insect Bites and Stings

Doing the following can help you avoid insect bites and stings:

- Wear bug repellent.
- Avoid wearing heavy perfumes.
- Check before drinking from cups, bottles and cans, as stinging insects are attracted to sweet drinks.

