Heat Stress Awareness

Summer is here, meaning it is time to watch for symptoms of heat illness such as; heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke, at home and on the job.

Know Yourself:
Individuals should learn the early signs of heat stress and take appropriate action. Supervisors should also be alert to the signs of heat stress affecting employees and take action before a problem develops.

Heat Illnesses

1. Signs Of HEAT CRAMPS:
   - Usually cramps will be in the arms and legs
   - Excessive sweating

2. Signs Of HEAT EXHAUSTION:
   - Heavy Sweating
   - Weakness
   - Weak Fast Pulse
   - Normal Body Temperature
   - Headache and Dizziness
   - Nausea and Vomiting

3. Signs of HEAT STROKE:
   - Confusion and Slurred Speech
   - High Body Temperature/Hot Skin
   - Strong Rapid Pulse
   - Weakness
   - Throbbing Headache
   - Seizures
   - Unconsciousness
   - CALL 911 for Assistance!

Preventing Heat Stress:

- **Proper Hydration**: Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Drink at least 5 - 7 ounces of water or a “sports” drink every 15 minutes when sweating heavily. It is best to alternate drinks of water with a sports drink to replace lost electrolytes.

- **Sweating**: Our bodies cool through the natural process of sweating, causing water loss that we must replace throughout the day. Remember to drink, water and sports drinks, often while sweating.

- **Exercise**: Physical fitness and health are important personal factors affecting heat stress.

- **Work Pace**: When planning your work consider that you must acclimate to heat; gradually gaining increased tolerance to higher temperatures.
  - Ideally, you should acclimate your body to the heat a couple of days before coming back to work from any extended time from work.
  - After returning to work, remember to pace yourself for the first few days.

Resources:
- OSHA Heat Stress App for Mobile Devices