

Heat Stress Prevention and Hot Weather

Approved By: Council
Approval Date:
Effective Date:
Revision Date:

Policy Statement

To provide a framework for implementing and coordinating extreme hot preparedness and response activities which focus on reducing the negative health impacts of extreme weather conditions.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of staff members that are frequently exposed to high levels of heat, and/or other climatic conditions that may cause adverse effects to their health and safety.

Application: This policy applies to all municipal staff to ensure the health and safety of the individuals at the Township of Douro-Dummer.

Definitions:

Heat Cramps: are painful, involuntary muscle spasms that usually occur during heavy exercise in hot environments. The spasms may be more intense and more prolonged than are typical nighttime leg cramps.

Heat Exhaustion: condition whose symptoms may include heavy sweating and a rapid pulse, a result of your body overheating.

Heat Stroke: condition caused by your body overheating, usually as a result of prolonged exposure to or physical exertion in high temperatures.

Exclusions: None

References & Related Policies:

Township of Douro-Dummer Health and Safety Policy
Occupational Health and Safety Act

Public Services Health & Safety Association Resources

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/managing-heat-stress-work>

<https://terraform-20180423174453746800000001.s3.amazonaws.com/attachments/cjiisgncg002afxj7xia3yvga-heatstressguide2009.pdf>

Consequences of Non-Compliance: It is important that all employees are in compliance with the appropriate procedures as set out by this policy. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary actions, as well as potential legal litigation.

Review Cycle: This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis.

Responsibility

Managers/Supervisors

Township of Douro-Dummer management and supervisory personnel will be responsible for the overall health and safety of staff members under their direction, including appropriate management of heat stress prevention policy and procedures.

Management and supervisory staff members will be required to ensure that hazard identification and risk assessments are performed, and that work is safe. Where temperature is a concern, management and supervisory staff will be required to evaluate the work that will be performed, ensure that appropriate safeguards (first aid plans and materials) are in place, ensure that relief measures (drinking water, rest periods scheduled) are available and implemented, and that staff are appropriately acclimatized to heat when performing work in areas where hot weather exists. Management and supervisory staff will communicate information regarding the signs and symptoms of heat stress / disorders.

As necessary, management and supervisory staff will adjust and adapt work schedules to effectively reduce the risk of injury and/or illness due to heat stress.

Employees

Employees of Township of Douro-Dummer are required to participate in health and safety training, adhere to all health and safety policies and safe work procedures.

Procedures to Policy A-27

The following steps shall be adhered to in order to prevent heat-related disorders:

1. Engineering Controls: Where possible, venting and/or air-conditioning shall be applied. Alternate methods will include the use of fans and opening of windows. For outdoor work, Township of Douro-Dummer shall work to ensure that a shaded area is available.

2. Acclimatization: In an effort to avoid shock associated with exposure to heat, Township of Douro-Dummer workers will be required to use appropriate acclimatization procedures to adapt them to new temperatures. This shall be accomplished by scheduling the worker to incrementally longer periods of exposure to heat over a period of 5-10 days.

3. Work Conditions: Township of Douro-Dummer management and supervisory staff will regularly check the weather conditions that will affect work and will adapt the schedule(s) and tasks as appropriate.

4. Work/Rest Cycles: Where possible, work requiring strenuous physical activity shall be scheduled for cool periods in the day (early morning or evening), and non-essential tasks will be re-scheduled until such time as the risk of injury or illness due to heat stress falls into an acceptable range. Scheduling of tasks will ensure that workers are rotated in a manner that allows for sufficient break periods in a cool and/or shaded area.

5. Personal Protective Equipment: Township of Douro-Dummer staff members required to perform work duties in hot environments are advised to utilize appropriate lightweight / breathable garments that provide maximum protection against the sun, and potential health and safety hazards involved in both the work, and heat stress. Where work is performed outdoors, sun block will be recommended.

6. Fluid Intake: To minimize the danger of dehydration and other health risks associated with heat stress, Township of Douro-Dummer will ensure that workers are provided with access to water. Staff members who perform work in areas with excessive heat are advised that the recommended intake of fluid is 250ml (one cup) per 20 minutes.

Criteria for Managing Heat Stress Induced by Hot Weather

- Humidex reaching or exceeding 35 degrees Celsius

- Environment Canada Humidex advisory (air temperature exceeding 30 degrees Celsius and Humidex exceeding 40 degrees Celsius)
- Environment Canada weather reports
- Heat wave (three or more days of temperatures of 32 degrees or more)