

■ Toolbox Talk: Working in Hot Weather

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Purpose

To protect operatives from the risks associated with working in hot weather conditions, including heat stress, dehydration, and sun exposure.

Legal Duty

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers have a legal duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of their workers.

Why This Matters

High temperatures combined with physical activity, like window cleaning, increase the risk of:

- Heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- Dehydration
- Reduced concentration and performance
- Sunburn and long-term skin damage

Key Safety Procedures

■ Stay Hydrated

- Drink small amounts of water frequently.
- Aim for at least 250ml every 15–20 minutes.
- Avoid caffeine and energy drinks.
- Consider electrolyte-replacement drinks.

■ Use Sunscreen

- Apply SPF 30+ sunscreen 30 minutes before work.
- Reapply every 2 hours.
- Cover ears, neck, hands, etc.

■ Wear Appropriate Clothing

- Lightweight, breathable clothing.
- Wide-brimmed hat or cap.
- UV-rated sunglasses.
- High-visibility if needed.

■ Take Breaks in the Shade

- Take regular breaks in shaded or cool areas.
- Avoid direct sun 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Use mobile shade if needed.

■ Recognise Symptoms of Heat Illness

- Excessive sweating, headache, dizziness, cramps.
- Stop work, move to shade, rehydrate.
- Call emergency services if necessary.

■ Employer Responsibilities

- Monitor weather (Met Office alerts).

- Adjust work schedules.
- Provide shade and water.
- Review risk assessments.

■ **Discussion Points**

1. What practical steps can reduce heat stress?
2. Have you ever experienced heat exhaustion?

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