



SAFETY

Nebraska Building Chapter

AGC Safety Initiative E-News

June 17, 2020

OUR Safety MISSION: Help each other enforce safety rules to ensure that every person on construction site goes home safe and healthy at end of the workday.

AGC Construction Safety, Health & Environmental Conference goes virtual July 14-16

AGC's Construction Safety, Health & Environmental Conference is the industry's foremost annual conference to hone in on the most critical safety, health and environmental compliance and risk issues impacting the business of construction. As a leader in construction safety, health and environment, our top priority is the safety and health of our members, attendees, speakers and staff. We have been closely monitoring the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and, due to phased re-opening restrictions in our host city, Louisville, Kentucky, we will be pivoting to a completely virtual experience for our **July 14-16** schedule of events. [Learn more.](#)

Jobsite Safety Tips for Summer Weather

It's warming up in many parts of the country. For construction companies, that means it's the perfect time to go to work. Unfortunately, in some climates, that warm summer weather also means construction workers are at a greater risk for heat-related illnesses. What can construction managers do to keep their teams safe during the warm summer weather? Here's a look at the risks and some options for avoiding them.

The Risks of Working in Summer Heat

What are the common risks that accompany working during hot summer weather? Construction workers and others who work outside during the summer are at an increased risk for:

- **Sunburn:** UV exposure can lead to sunburn. Without protection, repeated sunburns increase the risk that the individual can develop skin cancer or related conditions.
- **Dehydration:** Not getting enough water can cause problems with thinking, reasoning and mood changes and can [cause the body to overheat](#), according to the CDC.
- **Heat exhaustion:** This is the first stage of heat-related illness. Heat exhaustion causes the individual to sweat more as the body overheats.
- **Heatstroke:** When the body's [temperature reaches 104 degrees F](#), it experiences heatstroke, which can be fatal if left untreated.

Understanding these risks is just the first piece of the puzzle. What can construction managers do to protect their crew during warm summer weather?

- **Provide Plenty of Water**

The first step that construction managers should take is to provide cool or cold water for team members to drink frequently throughout the day. According to OSHA guidelines, employers should be providing water as soon as the heat index [rises above 103 degrees F](#) rather than soda or other drinks that contain caffeine.

Managers and supervisors should be encouraging their team members to drink small amounts of water frequently throughout the day instead of waiting until they feel thirsty to drink. This allows for optimum hydration in all but the most extreme situations.

- **Have an Emergency Plan**

Summer might be the best time for most construction crews to work, but summer weather can be tricky. The forecast can go from sun to thunderstorms to humid and cloudy, all within the span of a

few hours. Severe storms can throw a wrench in even the best-planned workday, so it's important to have an emergency plan in place for whatever the site might experience.

The exact details of an emergency plan will depend on the location of the jobsite and the kind of severe weather that it might experience. Floridian companies should have a plan in place for hurricanes and severe thunderstorms, while those in the Midwest will need to prepare for tornadoes and those on the west coast will need to know what to do in the event of an earthquake or wildfire.

- **Start a Stretch and Flex Program**

Preparing your body for construction work is always important. Healthy meals, hydration and rest all play a role in staying sharp and focused on the job. However, a little exercise between shifts also helps loosen muscles, wake up workers and prevent job-related injuries. In the summer, construction managers should make [stretching and flexing a routine](#) to reduce the post-lunch slump that summer heat and sunshine can exacerbate. A professional trainer or physiotherapist can help develop a program that works important muscles and customizes movements for workers.

- **Try to Avoid the Hottest Hours of the Day**

No one wants to get up early in the morning, but during the warm summer months, that might be the best option for keeping crew members safe from hot weather. Ideally, crews should avoid working during the hottest hours of the day — usually [between 11 am and 2 pm](#) in most climates, though it might vary depending on the location of the jobsite. This could be a time to schedule indoor meetings, lunch breaks or other events that don't require team members to be outdoors. If it isn't possible to avoid working during these hours, try to keep workers in the shade or indoors as much as possible.

- **Encourage Frequent Breaks**

Finally, ensure that managers and team members are taking frequent breaks whenever they're working in the summer heat. If they're scheduled well, these breaks won't interrupt the flow of work but will help to keep team members safe from heat-related illnesses. Provide crews with shaded or indoor spaces where they can take their breaks. These frequent pauses aren't nearly as effective if they have to take place out in the sun. This can also be a good time to encourage frequent hydration to make sure no one is getting dehydrated during the course of their duty.

- **Be Prepared and Stay Cool This Summer**

Regardless of where a job site is located, hot summer weather can put construction crews at risk unless precautions are taken to keep them safe. Provide plenty of water, take frequent breaks out of the sun, and try to avoid being outdoors during the hottest hours of the day whenever possible.

Pair these action items with a comprehensive emergency plan and you'll have everything you need to keep your crew safe from the heat this summer. - **Holly Welles**

Supplement your safety program with [AGC Nebraska Building Chapter Safety Resources](#). The site offers on-demand, online or on-site training opportunities on a variety of topics; services; regulations and news within our industry. Share this link with team members!

FREE SAFETY TRAINING VIDEOS--ON-DEMAND located under the **Training tab** at [agcnebuildersSafety.com](#). Members are provided complimentary day-passes, which allows unlimited usage of a selected video for a given day from 12:01am to 11:50pm. [Click here](#) to preview the construction video catalog. Click on the iTrainStation logo to set-up an account. You need to be approved as a user during Nebraska Building Chapter office hours, (Monday-Thursday, 8:00am-5:00pm and Friday, 8:00am-12noon) before adding videos in your library for access at a later date. If you have any questions, please contact: [Vicki](#), 402-438-0400.



Calendar of Events – Stay connected for the latest developments! [Learn more](#)

Safety Initiative Goals:

As an AGC Nebraska Building Chapter member, are you participating with:

- 100% of all AGC members and other contractors on AGC jobsites enforcing OSHA standards as they apply to falls, electrical safety and possible another topic.
- 100% of all AGC members will have set their own company goals to improve safety in their firm and have a way to measure progress towards the goal.
- 100% of all AGC members will encourage and support all contractors on their jobsites to set their own company goals for improving safety.