



**Resourcing
Solutions**
engaging people

HSQE Briefing Summer 2019



Our Safety Vision:

Our vision of “preventing harm to all” is at the centre of our Safety Strategy and is synonymous with our commitment to resourcing and working safely.

We believe that our vision can be achieved if we all develop a safe mind-set, plan our tasks correctly and actively seek ways to prevent incidents. We also believe that behaving in a safe way will also lead to zero accidents. We have devised a set of rules that underpins our vision and are consistent with our mantra.

Think safe, act safe and be safe!

Be fit for work
Stay Hydrated

Summer working

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Why is this information relevant to me

- 1 We are all affected by the hot weather
- 2 We deploy our staff into safety critical environments on a daily basis
- 3 This potentially brings with it an increased risk – due to fatigue/ heat exhaustion/ heat stroke
- 4 We care for our people and have a duty to look after them
- 5 We also have a duty to look after each other



Summer working.

Taking advantage of the warmer weather and the longer days improves our health and wellbeing. It can lift our mood and allows us to get some vitamin D, which is vital for a healthy immune system.

Whether you're walking to or from work, enjoying your lunch break outside in the sun, or working outside all day, you need to make sure you are properly protected. Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer.

Sunburn doesn't just happen on holiday – you can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy. Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.

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Sun safety tips

- Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.
- Wear a high factor, SPF 30 or above, sun cream to protect against UVB rays and at least a four star UVA rating. Thames Water operations workers can order SPF factor 30 sun cream from the Liscombe catalogue.

[order now »](#)

- Wear sunglasses/ eye protection with wraparound lenses or wide arms with the CE Mark and European Standard EN 1836:2005.
- Cover up with suitable clothing:
 - a wide-brimmed hat that shades the face, neck and ears
 - a long-sleeved top
 - trousers or long skirts in close-weave fabrics that don't allow sunlight through

[NHS Choices - sun safety »](#)



If you're on an operational site or carrying out a job that requires you to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) you need to follow the guidance in the next section.



Summer working.

It's our policy that hard hats, gloves, glasses, hi-vis and safety boots are worn as the minimum requirement in all designated areas, on all operational sites and when working out in the Live Rail environment.

When the weather's warm it can be tempting to take off your PPE to keep cool.

Please don't do this as it's there for your protection. Make sure you stay hydrated in the warm weather and use the correct PPE for the job.

If you are working in hot weather there is a risk you or your teammates could suffer from heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion is not serious under normal circumstances and usually gets better given the opportunity cool down. However, within a safety critical environment – the potential for harm is very real.

If the condition turns into heat stroke, it needs to be treated as an emergency.

Summer working.

To help prevent heat exhaustion or heat stroke:

- plan physically demanding tasks during the cooler morning period
- keep in regular communication with your teammates
- ensure there is an adequate supply of cool drinks available – refrigerate drinks overnight and use cool bags and ice to keep them cool.
- make sure everyone takes suitable and sufficient breaks in shaded areas
- rotate people undertaking physical work to allow for rest and rehydration
- if you can, sprinkle water over skin or clothes

Don't ignore warning signs – if you are starting to feel unwell, stop what you are doing. The signs of heat exhaustion include:

- headache
- dizziness and confusion
- loss of appetite and feeling sick
- excessive sweating and pale, clammy skin
- cramps in the arms, legs and stomach
- fast breathing or pulse
- temperature of 38°

Heat Exhaustion what to do.

If someone is showing signs of heat exhaustion they need to be cooled down:

- call a first aider and move them to a cool place
- if it's safe (i.e. no chemical hazards etc.), remove layers of clothing
- get them to lie down and raise their feet slightly
- get them to drink plenty of water. Sports or rehydration drinks are OK
- cool their skin – spray or sponge them with cool water and fan them. Cold packs around the armpits or neck are good too
- stay with them until they are better



They should start to cool down and feel better within 30 minutes.

Call 999 if the person:

- is no better after 30 minutes
- feels hot and dry
- is not sweating even though they are too hot
- has a temperature that's risen to 40C or above
- has rapid or shortness of breath
- is confused
- has a fit (seizure)
- loses consciousness
- is unresponsive



These can be signs of heat stroke. While you wait for help, keep giving first aid and put them in the recovery position if they lose consciousness.

Hydration tips

- 1 Aim to drink six to eight glasses of fluid at regular intervals throughout the day to stay hydrated.
- 2 Water, lower fat milk and sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.
- 3 20-30% of your daily fluid intake can also come from food, like fruit and vegetables.
- 4 Sip water in small amounts before, during and after exercise.
- 5 Watch for changes in hydration by checking the colour of your urine. It should be pale straw colour. Anything darker is a sign you need to drink more.
- 6 If you are feeling tired, have a headache or are experiencing any other signs of dehydration, try having a glass of water as a first step.
- 7 If you are reducing the amount of fluid you drink because you are concerned about the lack of toilet facilities, please speak to your local EHS advisor.

Alcohol.

It's estimated that nearly three in every 10 UK adults drink more alcohol when the weather gets warmer. Make sure you know your limits and aren't drinking more than the government's health guidelines for alcohol (men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis).

Alcohol is a diuretic and can have the effect of making you sweat more. The combination of sweating more in the heat and going to the toilet more regularly means you could lose more fluid than you take in and become dehydrated, so always try to drink water and soft drinks in between alcoholic drinks.



Sleep and Fatigue.

On a hot day in the summer, longer daylight hours and uncomfortable night temperatures can disrupt our normal sleeping patterns and leave us feeling irritable and lethargic which can affect how we feel and perform at work.

Sleep experts suggest the ideal bedroom temperature for sleep is around 15-18°C. Our body temperature needs to drop slightly for us to have a really good night's sleep. A hot stuffy bedroom doesn't help.



If you are still having problems sleeping, try the NHS sleep self-assessment tool which has practical advice and tips on what to do next.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/?tabname=sleep-tips>



Please remember also...

- 1 Elderly relatives also suffer the effects of heat exhaustion – why not pop around tonight
- 2 Young children are particularly susceptible to the heat
- 3 If you're going on holiday this year – enjoy the sun but take precautions
- 4 Pets also suffer the effects of heat exhaustion – never lock your dog in a hot car
- 5 The surface temperature of pavements can very easily burn your pets feet

**“Think Safe,
Act Safe and
Be Safe”**

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