VLR SAFETY TAILGATE TALK

August 2016

Subject: ***Heat Stress***

Date: _____

Location (garage, mm, etc…):

Instructions:

Safety Coordinators & Supervisors should use this Tailgate Talk as a guide for discussion during their safety meetings. The primary purpose of the safety meetings is to give crews the opportunity to discuss any safety related concerns they may have.

Once the meeting has concluded, the Presenter should have each employee sign this form and include their Employee ID# in the spaces below.

TGT Presenter: _____

Name	Employee
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Heat stress is a buildup of body heat generated either internally by muscle use or externally by the environment. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke result when the body is overwhelmed by heat. As the heat increases, body temperature rises painlessly. An increase in body temperature of two degrees Fahrenheit can effect mental functioning. A five degree increase can result in serious illness or death.

During hot weather, heat illness may be an underlying cause of other types of injuries, such as heart attacks, falls and equipment accidents. The most serious heat related illness is **heat stroke.** The symptoms are confusion, irrational behavior, convulsions, coma and death. On average, 20% of all heat stroke victims die regardless of health or age.

Preventing heat stress will:

- Protect Health-Heat illness is preventable and treatable before it is life threatening.
- Improve Safety-Any heat stress can impair functioning.
- Increase Productivity-People work slower and less efficiently when they are suffering from heat stress.

Employers, supervisors and workers all have an essential role to play in preventing heat stress. Each member of the team should use good judgment to prevent heat related illness.

Key elements for controlling heat stress are:

- Keep Hydrated– Drink plenty of water to keep your body hydrated. Adapt work and pace to weather conditions.
- If on medication, review the side effects of prolonged heat and sun exposure.
- Take breaks to cool down. A 10 -15 minute break every two hours is effective.
- Arrange work activities and match them to employees' physical condition.

Heat Stroke/Exhaustion First Aid:

- Seek medical attention immediately. Move the victim to a cool place. Remove any heavy clothing and leave loose, light clothing in place.
- Keep victim's head and shoulders slightly elevated (approx. 8-12").
- Immediately cool victim by any available means (ice packs, wet towels or sheets etc.). Cooling items should be placed at areas with abundant blood supply. This includes the neck, armpits and groin area.

IF NO IMPROVEMENT IS NOTED WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF A HEAT EXHAUSTED EMPLOYEE, SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY.

When possible, schedule heavy tasks and work requiring personal protective equipment (PPE) for cooler, morning or evening hours. Extreme hot temperatures may require postponement or modification of non-essential tasks.

Most protective garments (PPE), including chaps, gloves, suits, respirators and protective clothing, limit sweat evaporation, but not sweat production. Moderation, hydration and special cooling systems are items that need to be in place to effectively protect the employee as well as keeping production moving forward.

It is each employee's responsibility to protect themselves from the effects of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. **Drink plenty of water, limit exposure to prolonged heat, sun and be aware of your fellow employees and environment.**

WATER. REST. SHADE. Link/Resources