1. **Purpose**

The following information is provided to assist WTAMU departments in developing procedures to protect students and employees from thermal stress. This program sets forth recommended minimum requirements that need to be followed to maximize the safety of all faculty, staff, and students that may be subject to excessive heat or exhaustion.

2. **Scope**

Affected departments of WTAMU are expected to establish Thermal Stress Prevention and Management Procedures. The Thermal Stress Prevention and Management Procedures shall include provisions to train employees and students about the:

- Potential causes of thermal stress
- Methods to prevent thermal stress
- Recognition of thermal stress symptoms
First aid for thermal stress related disorders

3. Responsibilities

The WTAMU EHS will:
- assist in identifying safety procedures as necessary
- assist with training as appropriate
- monitor program compliance

The department/supervisor will:
- identify persons susceptible to thermal stress
- provide personal protective equipment and all other necessary equipment for the prevention and treatment of thermal stress
- provide proper training for employees and students.

The employee/student will follow guidelines described in this program to assure safe thermal stress procedures.

4. Thermal Stress

People may suffer from thermal (heat) stress during hot, humid conditions so preventive measures must be taken to reduce their risk. To prevent thermal stress, employees should limit strenuous physical activity during the hottest portion of the day, wear a brimmed hat when in the sun, take frequent breaks, and drink plenty of fluids. Thermal stress occurs in two forms:
- Heat Exhaustion
- Heat Stroke

4.1. Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is usually caused by strenuous physical activity and hot, humid conditions. Because heat exhaustion is the body's response to insufficient water and salt, it should be treated as quickly as possible. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include the following:
- Exhaustion and restlessness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Cold, clammy, moist skin
- Pale face
- Cramps in abdomen and lower limbs
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Falling body temperature
- Fainting

Take the following steps to administer first aid for heat exhaustion:
- Have the victim lie down in a cool or shaded place.
- If the victim is conscious, have him/her slowly sip cool water.
- If the victim is unconscious or is conscious but does not improve, seek medical aid as soon as possible.
- If the victim is sweating profusely, have him or her sip cool water that contains one teaspoon of table salt per pint of water.

4.2. Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is usually caused by exposure to extreme heat and humidity and/or a feverish illness. Heat stroke occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature by sweating. Heat stroke is extremely dangerous and may be fatal if not treated immediately.

The signs and symptoms of heat stroke include the following:
Immediately take the following steps to administer first aid for heat stroke:
- If possible, move the victim to a cool place.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Remove the victim's clothing.
- If the victim is conscious, place him in a half-sitting position and support the head and shoulders.
- If the victim is unconscious, place him on the side with the head facing sideways.
- Fan the victim and sponge the body with cool water.

5. Record Retention

No official state records may be destroyed without permission from the Texas State Library as outlined in Texas Government Code, Section 441.187 and 13 Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 1, Chapter 6, Subchapter A, Rule 6.7. The Texas State Library certifies Agency retention schedules as a means of granting permission to destroy official state records.

West Texas A & M University Records Retention Schedule is certified by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. West Texas A & M University Environmental Health and Safety will follow Texas A & M University Records Retention Schedule as stated in the Standard Operating Procedure 61.99.01.W0.01 Records Management. All official state records (paper, microform, electronic, or any other media) must be retained for the minimum period designated.

6. Training

West Texas A & M University Environmental Health and Safety will follow the Texas A & M University System Policy 33.05.02 Required Employee Training. Staff and faculty whose required training is delinquent more than 90 days will have their access to the Internet terminated until all trainings are completed. Only Blackboard and Single Sign-on will be accessible. Internet access will be restored once training has been completed. Student workers whose required training is delinquent more than 90 days will need to be terminated by their manager through Student Employment.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Contact Office

WTAMU Environmental Health and Safety
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