

OSHA Announces Proposed Rule on Heat

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The Department of Labor released its long-awaited proposed rule to protect indoor and outdoor workers from hazards associated with extreme heat. As expected, it focuses on water, rest shade, acclimatization, and training.

This is a reminder to employers to prioritize efforts that provide necessary training and ensure they are ready to respond if a worker is experiencing signs and symptoms of a heat-related illness or of a heat emergency.

The proposed rule would require employers to develop an injury and illness prevention plan to control heat hazards in workplaces affected by excessive heat. Among other things, the plan would require employers to evaluate heat risks and — when heat increases risks to workers — implement requirements for drinking water, rest breaks and control of indoor heat. It would also require a plan to protect new or returning workers unaccustomed to working in high heat conditions.

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National Law Review, Volume XIV, Number 185

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