



San Diego Services

AUGUST WEEK 1

# Staying Cool in Hot Weather

Have you checked the temperature lately? It's hot, but construction work continues in spite of hot and humid weather. Because you're exposed to high temperatures during the summer months, you must be aware of the added hazards to your safety and health.

**Hot Temperatures and Safety:** Working in the heat involves more than just being uncomfortable. As temperatures rise, so does the frequency of accidents. If your hands are sweaty, or if your safety glasses fog up, accidents are more likely to happen. Also, when you are continuously exposed to heat, your mental alertness and physical abilities decrease. The physical discomfort you feel in the heat could make you more likely to take shortcuts or overlook the dangers of hazardous tasks.

**Heat-Related Illnesses:** Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness because it can be fatal if not treated quickly and properly. It occurs when your body temperature rises, but your body doesn't perspire to reduce its temperature. Internal organs shut down because of excessive heat. Signs of heat stroke include confusion, delirium, loss of consciousness, and a body temperature of 105°F or higher. The victim's skin is usually hot, dry, and red or blotchy. Medical help is needed immediately. While waiting, remove the victim to a cool area, soak all clothing with cool water, and fan the body to improve cooling.

Heat exhaustion is a mild form of heat illness caused by excessive sweating without adequate replacement of fluids and salts. Symptoms include extreme weakness, fatigue, nausea, or headache; along with clammy skin and a pale or flushed complexion. Have the victim rest in a cool place, loosen clothing, and drink fluids slowly. Severe cases require professional medical attention.

**Preventing Illness and Preserving Safety:** Prevent safety and health hazards by allowing your body to adjust to the heat. It takes 5 to 7 days for your body to adapt so the heat will be more endurable. Adequate sleep and good nutrition also help maintain a high level of heat tolerance.

Slow down, take frequent breaks in cool rest areas, and try to save strenuous activities for the coolest part of the day. Minimize heat in your work area by opening windows, using fans, or working in ventilated areas.

In one day, a worker exposed to the heat can produce 2 to 3 gallons of sweat. It's important that you drink as much water as you're losing through perspiration. Don't use thirst as an indication of when to drink. Replenish fluids often.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**You have to keep a cool head to work safely in hot weather. Remember to wear sunscreen as well as adequate protective clothing.**

**NOTES:**

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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**MEETING DOCUMENTATION:**

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San Diego Services

# Fire Prevention

AUGUST WEEK 2

Fires are very costly to the construction industry. Fires take lives, cause injuries and cost millions of dollars in lost equipment, production and time each year. Let's discuss what we can do to recognize the potential causes of fires. By eliminating risks we can prevent fires.

- Obey all signs and product warnings such as "No Smoking".
- If you are doing any kind of hot work or have an open fire, have a fire extinguisher or hose close by.
- Never tamper with electrical wiring or appliances unless you are authorized to make changes or repairs.
- Don't store flammables or combustibles near open flames or heating devices.
- Never block off access to fire extinguishers, firefighting equipment, or fire exits.
- Do not smoke around refueling operations; turn off engines before refueling.
- Never leave a heater or fire unattended.
- Only use approved metal safety cans when you are handling flammable liquids.

- When possible, perform welding and cutting operations off site away from dry timbers, paint chips, old insulation, and nests in walls.
- Replace or disconnect old, faulty wiring so you don't overload old wires which may have poor, brittle insulation.
- Store flammable liquids off site, especially chemical solvents used in paint stripping and wood refinishing.
- Use space heaters with caution, especially petroleum-fueled heaters which, if spilled, would fuel a fire.
- Secure the site after hours since seemingly abandoned buildings attract unwanted visitors.

Whether you work on new construction or remodeling, you are responsible for *preventing* fires. If prevention fails, and a fire starts, you may fight it, but only if it is relatively safe to do so. Use fire extinguishers only as intended. Leave the area if there are combustibles or flammables that may ignite or explode. Be sure you have an exit route available.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Fire safety is everyone's business.**

**Include your family members in the discussion.**

**Practice E.D.I.T.H. — Exit Drills In The Home.**

**NOTES:**

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# Fire Extinguishers & Fire Prevention

AUGUST WEEK 3

As you walk back to the jobsite after lunch, you smell something burning and see smoke coming from your work area. You come closer and realize a fire has ignited inside a nearby trash can. The contents of the plastic trash can are burning quickly. Do you know what to do? What's burning inside the trash can? Where is the nearest fire extinguisher? What types of fires will it extinguish? Do you know how to use it? Should you attempt to put out the fire or has it gotten too big for you to handle? Are there any co-workers who need to be warned of the increasing danger?

All these questions should be on your mind as you evaluate the situation. *Now* is the time to learn how to answer those questions and how to use a fire extinguisher. You must be prepared to make decisions and act if there's a fire!

Your first responsibility is to sound a fire alarm and to alert your co-workers to get out of harm's way. Make sure you choose someone to call the fire department. You need professional firefighters there as soon as possible. What may at first seem like a small fire could get out of hand before you know it. Even if you put the fire out, the pros will ensure it is completely extinguished and can help determine the cause.

Next, decide whether the fire is small enough for you to put out with a portable fire extinguisher. Extinguishers are

designed to handle small fires. You need to know what is burning and whether or not your extinguisher can safely and effectively fight the fire. Using the wrong extinguisher for the type of fire you are dealing with can make the situation worse. Type "A" extinguishers are for combustibles like wood, paper, and cardboard. Type "B" extinguishers are designed for fires involving liquids like gasoline, fuel oil, grease, and solvents. Type "C" extinguishers are for electrical fires.

You should only attempt to fight a fire if: 1) you have been trained to use a fire extinguisher; 2) you know the type of material that is burning and have an appropriate extinguisher; 3) you can do so without endangering your life. If the fire is out of control, growing rapidly, or you have any doubts about your success in fighting it; evacuate, stay away, and wait for the fire department to arrive.

The best way to fight fires is to prevent them. Think before you do—keep combustibles and flammables away from sources of ignition. Practice fire prevention *every day*, both on the job and at home.

### SAFETY REMINDER

**Be sure your kitchen is equipped with a fire extinguisher and inspect it regularly.**

#### NOTES:

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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# Portable Heaters

AUGUST WEEK 4

Portable heaters make it possible for you to work more effectively in cold weather. They provide comfortable working conditions and allow you to continue on schedule. But if portable heaters are used improperly they can be dangerous. With the winter season upon us, it's important to review some guidelines for the safe use of portable heaters in order to prevent fires, burns, explosions, shock, and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Whether you use a fuel-burning heater or an electric heater, think about safety **before** you begin to use it. Read and follow all of the manufacturer's recommendations. Instructions will not be the same for all heaters. Use extreme caution when selecting a location for the unit. Do not place a heater in a hallway, doorway, or any other walkway where it is likely to be bumped and tipped over. Also, be sure the heater is on solid footing. Keep a fire extinguisher near, but not right next to, each portable heater. Never leave an operating heater unattended. Keep heaters away from combustible or flammable materials including clothing, walls, curtains, and scrap material. All portable heaters should be kept **at least three feet** from everything around them. Never throw combustibles into or onto a heater.

### Electric heaters:

Check the power cord for damage. If the cord is frayed or

cracked, do not use the heater. Plug heaters directly into a wall outlet. The large power load could cause an extension cord to overheat and start a fire. Never touch an electric heater if you are wet or have wet hands and don't use an electric heater in a damp or wet area. Unplug the heater when it is not in use and before making any repairs.

### Fuel-burning heaters:

Be sure you provide ample fresh air and good ventilation. This will allow enough oxygen for efficient combustion and to prevent the buildup of harmful gases. Never store bottled gas products, petroleum, or fuels near a heater. A spill, leak, or overheated container could cause a fire or explosion. Always allow the heater to cool down before attempting to refuel it. Clean up fuel spills immediately. Never have a flame large enough to throw sparks. Careless use of portable heaters can lead to injuries and deadly fires. Use portable heaters safely.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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### Carbon monoxide is a killer!

**Use a fuel-burning heater in a closed space and your kids may not see you for Christmas.**

### NOTES:

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# Please "Pass" the Fire Extinguisher

AUGUST WEEK 5

There are many different causes of fires in construction. Some of the most common causes are open burns, cigarette butts, and sparks from welding. Do you know what to do if there is a fire in your work area?

Let's take a few minutes to review how fire extinguishers work. Fire extinguishers are rated based on the classes of the fires they can extinguish. Class A fires involve ordinary combustibles like wood, paper, and cardboard. Extinguishers that are effective on Class A fires may contain pressurized water, foam, or multi-purpose dry chemical. Class B fires involve flammable liquids or gases such as gasoline, diesel fuel, and acetylene. An extinguisher used for a Class B fire might use CO2, multi-purpose dry chemical, foam, or Halon. Class C fires are electrical fires. Extinguishers used to fight electrical fires may contain CO2, multi-purpose dry chemical, or Halon. Many extinguishers are rated ABC; they work on these three classes of fire. The fourth class of fire is Class D. This unique kind of fire, which is very rare on construction sites, involves combustible metals. The extinguishing agents used on Class D fires are specifically designed to absorb heat and cool the material. Class D fires react violently to water. Do you know where the nearest extinguisher is? What is its rating? Do you remember how to use it?

One way to remember how to use a fire extinguisher is **PASS**. This acronym stands for **Pull, Aim, Squeeze, and Sweep**. If a fire starts and you decide to use a fire extinguisher, **Pull** the pin, **Aim** the nozzle at the base of the fire, **Squeeze** the trigger handle, and **Sweep** the extinguishing agent across the base of the fire.

At the first sign of a fire call 911. If you try to fight the fire remember to keep your own safety in mind. Always leave yourself a way out and when the fire extinguisher is empty leave immediately.

What can you do to ensure that your work gets done safely and without a fire? Make sure you follow all the safety rules, observe hot-work permit procedures, store combustibles safely, observe "No Smoking" signs, and use proper containers for cigarette and match disposal. If a fire does break out, grab the extinguisher and remember **PASS** (**Pull, Aim, Squeeze and Sweep**). If you catch it soon enough and use this technique, you should be able to put the fire out before it can do much damage.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Be sure your kitchen is equipped with a fire extinguisher and inspect it regularly.**

**NOTES:**

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