# How to Protect Construction Workers from Weather Hazards

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Working in the construction industry means working outdoors, which means weather conditions are a critical factor in your employees' work environment. Outdoor workers are exposed to many types of hazards depending on their type of work, geographic region, season and duration of time they are outside.

Weather hazards to outdoor workers may include extreme heat, extreme cold, lightning, and ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Extreme heat can result in a heat stroke, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and a heat rash. Extreme cold can cause hypothermia and frostbite. Lightning, of course, is a serious threat to outdoor construction workers, and UV radiation is associated with sunburn and skin cancer.

If you employ outdoor workers, now is a good time to review your company policies regarding the protection of those workers from the elements. You can begin to protect your company from situations like those described above by adhering to the following suggestions:

- Learn the signs and symptoms of weather-related illnesses and injuries and what to do to help workers.
- Train workers about weather-related illnesses and injuries.
- Encourage workers to wear proper clothing and PPE for the expected weather conditions.
- Be sure workers in extreme conditions take frequent short breaks in the shade if it's hot or in a warm shelter if it is cold.
- Try to schedule work for the warmest part of the day in cold weather and the coolest part of the day in hot weather.

Review and revise your current policy now, and protect your workers from weather-related incidents on your construction sites.

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