



Canadian Union of Postal Workers
Syndicat des travailleurs et travailleuses des postes

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Straight Throughs Can Be Dangerous to Your Health

Subject: Health and Safety

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Summer is here again and with it comes hazards associated with hot weather. External workers take note! Straight throughs are not the answer during hot spells. In fact, they can cause serious conditions that may require hospitalization.

GUIDELINES FROM ENVIRONMENT CANADA SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY

The following suggestions will keep you cool during a summer heat wave:

SLOW DOWN

Your body cannot do it's best in high temperatures.

GET OUT OF THE HEAT and into a cooler environment as soon as your body warns you that it's getting too hot.

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER to keep your body from drying out.

MAINTAIN SALT LEVELS IN YOUR BODY

If you are on a salt-free diet, check with your doctor.

AVOID HIGH PROTEIN FOODS, as they can increase your body's water loss and heat production.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY in lightweight, light-coloured clothing.

AVOID GETTING SUNBURNED, it restricts the body's cooling system.

USE SUN SCREEN and carry extra sunscreen with you, applying it every 20 to 30 minutes.

IN CASE OF:

• **HEAT CRAMPS** – Symptomized by muscle spasms, possible heavy sweating, extreme thirst, nausea, cold and clammy skin. Move victim to cool, shaded area to rest, and apply firm pressure to cramping muscles. Give victim two glasses of salty water at a 10 to 15 minute interval between each glass if cramps persist. (Mix 5 ml of salt to 1 litre of water)

• **HEAT EXHAUSTION** – Symptomized by sweating, weakness, cold and clammy skin, low blood pressure, disorientation and possibly vomiting. Move victim to cool area to rest. Provide salty water and cover person if

shivering. Victim should rest in bed until recovered. Seek medical help.

• HEAT STROKE – Symptomized by weakness, headache, hot and dry skin, dilated pupils, offensive body odour, sharply rising temperature, pulse pounding and full, elevated blood pressure, delirium or coma. Skin may be flushed at first, later ashen or purplish. Take victim to hospital immediately. If waiting medical evacuation, move victim to cool, shaded area and sponge body with cool water, letting water evaporate to reduce body temperature.

If you feel yourself being overcome by heat, PLAY IT SAFE!

Exercise your right to refuse. Contact your supervisor and shop steward and inform them that you are invoking article 33, clause 33.13 and that you will be returning to the workplace.

Use your common sense and have a safe and healthy summer.

Solidarity,
Gayle Bossenberry
National Union Representative - Health and Safety

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