**Sun Safety Policy Example - Small Workplace**

There is a fact sheet on Sun Safety Policies that accompanies the policy examples. Please read the fact sheet first. The contents of this document are examples only and require adaptation to individual workplace needs.

1. **Background**

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation and heat stress from exposure to the sun are known to cause health effects ranging from mild to severe permanent illness and even death from heat stress or skin cancer. As such, exposure to the sun is a serious health and safety issue for Small Example Corporation and its Employees.

It is the Policy of Small Example Corporation that all employees who are exposed to the sun in the course of their duties be protected. This objective shall be achieved by following the practices and procedures as directed by this Policy and the Managers and Supervisors of Small Example Corporation.

1. **Policy**

Small Example Corporation shall protect employees and meet legal obligations by establishing procedures and practices to reduce employees’ exposure to UV and heat stress from the sun.

All employees shall follow the roles and responsibilities in this policy to carry out the established practices and procedures to prevent over-exposure to UV and heat stress from the sun.

1. **Scope**

This Policy applies to all Small Example Corporation management, employees, constructors and subcontractors.

1. **Roles and Responsibilities**

Management shall:

Maintain practices and procedures to prevent over-exposure to the sun. Employee input is key this this process and is encouraged. These practices and procedures shall be reviewed once per year or as necessary, including assessing solar UV and heat stress risks and implementation of control measures to reduce these risks. Each year in spring the company will provide training to employees regarding sun safety. The Health and Safety Committee and OHS Lead shall investigate any incidents and recommend methods to eliminate the over-exposure in a timely fashion.

Supervisors shall:

Ensure that all PPE that is required is provided to workers including sunscreen of at least SPF 30

Daily, between March and October each year:

1. At 7:30 am each workday the Supervisor shall check the projected UV Index for the day by referencing [Environment Canada](https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/public_bulletins_e.html?Bulletin=fpcn48.cwao).
2. Post the projected UV Index for the day at a suitable location.
3. If the UV Index is expected to be less than 3, no immediate action is required. Continue to monitor the weather for a change resulting in higher UV levels than predicted.
4. If the UV Index is expected to be 3 or greater, or exceeds 3 during the day, the Supervisor shall inform the superintendent/manager, as well as all workers who may exposed to the sun. The supervisor will ensure that where possible:
   1. Between 11am and 3pm, work tasks are done in the shade.
   2. Arrangements are made to allow workers to take their breaks in the shade. This may include the use of portable shade structures where appropriate.
   3. Personal protection appropriate to the work tasks is used by all outdoor workers. This includes long sleeved shirts and pants, UV protective eyewear (including sunglasses, where appropriate), wide brimmed hats or hard hats with additional brims and neck flaps, and sunscreen and lip balm of SPF 30 or greater.
5. If the UV Index is expected to be 8 or greater, the Supervisor shall ensure workers are protected to the greatest extent practicable. In addition to the above measures, the Supervisor should consider whether it is possible to reschedule outdoor work activities indoors between 11am and 3pm, or consider how these work activities can be undertaken in the shade.

Include sun safety into toolbox/safety talks on a monthly basis between March and October.

Act as a positive sun safety role model for employees.

Provide appropriate first aid or arrange for medical attention in the event of an incident of over-exposure to the sun.

Report and investigate all incidents of over-exposure to the sun and take corrective action.

Monitor worksites for heat/humidex levels daily during heat alert/high humidex periods and implement response actions in accordance with *Daily Heat Stress Response Procedure*. This includes posting *Heat Stress Alerts* and *Heat Stress Warnings* when appropriate.

Utilize Heat Stress Risk Assessments for jobsites, such as the *Heat Stress Risk Assessment for Outdoor Workers – Daily Monitoring Plan*, and completing appropriate records (such as *Heat Stress Risk Assessment for Outdoor Workers – Daily Assessment Records*).

Ensure new employees are aware of the Heat Stress Safety Policy and practice heat safety.

Remind staff as opportunity presents to stay hydrated and seek shade during job tasks and breaks.

Make cool water supply easily accessible.

Ensure that all employees are wearing/using appropriate personal protection

Allow employees to acclimatize to hot working environments; staff should start out gradually and build up to optimum work level over a period of days. Implement acclimatization regimen in accordance with the approved safe work procedures.

Schedule more physically demanding tasks, before 11am or after 3pm, in the cooler times of the day on high humidex days when possible.

Rotate people through hot, heavy demand jobs, if possible.

Post and share daily Humidex with outdoor workers.

Ask how workers are feeling. Supervisors should monitor workplace temperature and humidity and check workers' condition. Allow workers to stop their work if they become extremely uncomfortable.

Implement work/rest cycle regimen in accordance with the approved safe work procedures.

Allow employees to self-pace their workloads during high heat stress periods and in accordance with the approved safe work procedures.

Reduce work for anyone at risk. Supervisors should use common sense in determining fitness for work in hot environments. Some factors to consider: age, poor conditioning, pregnancy, previous heat injuries, certain medical conditions, lack of acclimatization.

Be vigilant for signs and symptoms of heat stress. Will ensure that first aid is provided when necessary and will arrange emergency medical aid when appropriate.

Employees shall:

Be aware of the Sun Safety Policy and procedures.

Comply with Sun Safety Policy by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen and UV protective eyewear.

Check the daily forecast for the UV Index, and when it is 3 or higher protect your skin and eyes as much as possible.

When UV Index is greater than 3, seek shade during breaks and where possible work in shade between 11am and 3pm.

When UV Index is above 8, undertake work activities in shade wherever possible.

Use sun safety personal protective clothing and equipment.

Apply broad-spectrum water-resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen prior to starting the day and as needed throughout the day (i.e. after excessive sweating).

Utilize natural or artificial shade (i.e. portable shade) at worksites, where possible.

Be extra cautious and use additional protective measures around reflective surfaces.

Make suggestions to improve the Sun Safety Policy.

Act as a positive sun safety role model for other employees.

Utilize flex hours if possible, to avoid exposures during peak solar UV periods (11am and 3pm).

Not deliberately try to get a tan, and avoid getting a sunburn (erythema).

Use sources of vitamin D that are safer than sun exposure.

Report any instances of work-related sunburn or heat stress to their supervisor.

Acclimatize. It takes time to adjust to working in heat. Work with your supervisor to gradually increase your work load and heat exposure in accordance with the acclimatization regimen described in the approved safe work procedures.

Take more rest breaks when doing heavier work, and in high heat and humidity. Take breaks in the shade or in air conditioned buildings or vehicles.

Follow the work/rest cycle regimen as directed by your supervisor.

If possible, schedule work to minimize heat exposure. Do the hardest physical work during the coolest part of the day.

Encourage your co-workers to practice sun safe behaviours.

Drink water frequently. Drink enough water that you never become thirsty. During moderate activity in moderately hot conditions, workers should drink about 1 cup of water every 15-20 minutes.

Eat healthy. You can and should replace essential elements lost during sweating. Eat a balanced diet rather than taking salt tablets or drinking expensive sports drinks.

Be aware that some protective clothing or personal protective equipment may increase the risk of heat stress.

If necessary, consider also wearing specialized heat-protective clothing to help keep your body temperature down. Heat-protective clothing that may be useful for outdoor workers includes temperature-controlled clothing such as air-cooled suits, water-cooled suits, and ice-cooled waistcoats.

Wash clothes regularly and maintain good person hygiene.

Know signs and symptoms of heat illnesses. Watch out for heat-stress symptoms in yourself and your coworkers. Report heat symptoms early.

Use the buddy system to monitor one another as you may not see or feel the effects.

Know what to do in an emergency. The plan should include procedures for providing affected workers with first aid and arranging for medical aid.

Remember that your physical condition can reduce your ability to deal with the heat. Age, weight, fitness, health conditions (heart disease or high blood pressure), recent illness, or medications can all affect your ability to withstand high temperatures.

If you are on medication, read the label or talk to your doctor to understand how it might cause your body to react to the sun and heat.

Avoid eating large meals before working in hot environments.

1. **Sun Safety Response Procedures**

Refer to Work Procedures Manual for safe work procedures and daily response procedures.

1. **Definitions**

UV – ultraviolet radiation from the sun

Heat Stress – the physiological response of the human body to excessive heat exposure and is characterized by the body’s inability to self-regulate body temperature. It can lead to a range of heat-induced health conditions, the most serious being heat stroke.

Skin cancer – is cancer of the skin. It is the most common form of cancer in the world and the leading type of cancer in Canada. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation, particularly from the sun, is the primary cause of skin cancer. Outdoor workers are at a much greater risk of skin cancer than are indoor workers. The main types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma. Most skin cancers (particularly the non-melanoma skin cancers) can be treated effectively if identified early. However, there are many deaths each year each year from skin cancer, with most of these from melanoma.

PPE – Personal protective equipment

1. **Resources**
2. PPE List
3. Work Procedures Manual – Daily Heat Stress Response Procedure
4. Work Procedures Manual – Daily Solar UV Response Procedure
5. Work Procedures Manual – Heat Stress Risk Assessment for Outdoor Workers – Daily Monitoring Plan
6. Heat Stress Risk Assessment for Outdoor Workers – Daily Assessment Records
7. Resource – *SSAWC Training Presentations for Employees*
8. Resource – *SSAWC Training Presentations for Supervisors*
9. Resource – SSAWC *Safety Talks*
10. Resource – *SSAWC Posters*
11. Resource – *SSAWC Fact Sheets*
12. Resource – *SSAWC Example Roles and Responsibilities*

Visit sunsafetyatwork.ca for more information. This resource was prepared by Keith McMillan and Dr. Thomas Tenkate. Production of this resource has been made possible through financial support from Health Canada through the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.