

Safety Alert



SUBJECT: PPE and Heat Stress

RECIPIENTS: All Council Services

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Feeling Hot, Hot Hot

As we move into summer, warmer temperatures can be expected - possibly for prolonged periods.

Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) in warm / hot environments increases the risk of heat stress. This occurs when the body is unable to cool itself enough to maintain a healthy temperature. Heat stress can cause heat exhaustion and lead to heat stroke if the person is unable to cool down



What measures can be taken to reduce the risk of Heat Stress?

Suitable measures to keep work places cool, and enable staff to make behavioural adaptations to stay cool and well hydrated should be made, for example:

- Draw blinds / curtains where practical to do so.
- Use desk fans / free standing fans – with current Portable Appliance Test in place.
- Open (suitable) windows – allow air to move through building.

Staff may require more frequent breaks, and the frequency of PPE changes may increase, with a resulting increase in demand.

Plan and Assess

- Assess the risk of overheating in your workplace and consider appropriate control measures to implement.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the risk of heat stress when wearing PPE and know how to reduce their risk:

Staff working in warm/hot conditions should follow the advice:

- Take regular breaks; find somewhere cool (or shaded if working outside) if you can.
- Make sure you are hydrated – drink water at regular intervals.
- Don't wait until you start to feel unwell before you take a break.
- The lighter the colour of your urine, the more hydrated you are – a 'light straw' colour is ideal.
- Between shifts, try to stay cool as this will give your body a chance to recover

The Corporate Health & Safety Team can be contacted at corporatehealthandsafety@lincolnshire.gov.uk