



Preventing Sunburn to Staff

Background - Anyone can be burned by the sun. The incidence of skin cancer is increasing in epidemic proportions in our country. The risk of developing a melanoma, a deadly skin cancer, doubles every 10 years. Protecting skin from the sun's rays could prevent about 80 % of skin cancers. Harmful ultraviolet rays (UV) reflect off water and light colored surfaces, such as concrete, water, sand and snow. UV rays also reach below the surface of water.

The following are tips for helping workers avoid sunburn:

- Use sunscreen every day of the year. Even on cloudy days up to 80% of the sun's harmful rays will reach the earth.
- Wear a sunscreen that has at least a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15.
- Use plenty of sunscreen. Studies have shown that the average person uses about 1/2 the amount of sunscreen that the manufacturer used when determining the SPF value. The average adult requires one ounce of sunscreen for adequate total body coverage.
- Apply sunscreens to dry skin about 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors.
- Understand Sun Protection Factors (SPF). A SPF of 8 filters out 86% of ultraviolet radiation; SPF 15 blocks 92% of damaging rays; and SPF 30 blocks 96% of ultraviolet rays.
- Use stick balms for lips and ears. These can also be used around the eyes to avoid stinging.
- Wear Hats. Each inch of hat brim can lower your lifetime risk of skin cancer by 10%.
- Wear protective eyewear. Sunglasses with UV-blocking filters are very important, and not every pair of sunglasses provides that protection. The eye is the second most common site in which melanoma develop.
- Be aware that some medications can increase sensitivity to the sun's rays. Certain antibiotics, diuretics, antihistamines and antidepressants may cause increased sensitivity to the sun.
- Check the UV Index each day and dress accordingly. The UV Index is a prediction of the sun's UV radiation on any given day at noon.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your Risk Management Consultant, or Jim Rhoads, NJPHA-JIF Safety Director, 610-937-2694, or e-mail james_rhoads@pmagroup.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE - The information and suggestions presented by PMA Insurance Group in this risk control technical guide are for your consideration in your loss prevention efforts. They are not intended to be complete or definitive in identifying all hazards associated with your business, preventing workplace accidents, or complying with any safety related or other laws or regulations. You are encouraged to alter the information and suggestions to fit the specific hazards of your business and to have your legal counsel review all of your plans and company policies.