

TITLE: Oregon OSHA's new rules on heat illness prevention and protection from wildfire smoke

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Topic: Oregon OSHA administrative rules to protect workers from high ambient temperatures and wildfire smoke. Target audiences: Employer, public health professionals and administrators, government agencies, educators, employees, community advocates and partners.

ABSTRACT: Every year, people die in occupational settings from exposure to excessive heat and many more suffer a heat-related illness; most of these are preventable. Between October 2019 and July 2021, 37 fatalities were reported to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and at least four heat-related fatalities occurred in Oregon. In addition, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) reported that Oregon's air quality in 2020 was the worst on record. Large wildfires have been increasing across the western United States in the last decade and are expected to become more frequent, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. Oregon OSHA, in collaboration with stakeholders and advisory committees, developed standards to protect workers from illness due to exposure to high heat and wildfire smoke.

OBJECTIVE(S): Identify when heat and smoke levels rise to dangerous conditions for workers. Evaluate risks and formulate plans for safety and health of the workforce. Demonstrate understanding of the symptoms of illness, and the safety rules and training requirements. Evaluate your plans for addressing safety when environmental risk factors rise to unhealthy levels, including acclimatization, administrative controls, and communications.
