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Did you know...

That the summer workplace safety tips contained in this newsletter are not limited to the workplace. Read the tips and use them to stay cool while enjoying summer outdoor recreation.

Award's Arnie Palmer

If you're in the mood for a tastier cool down tip, try this refreshing twist on iced tea. Tastes great after a hard day of work in the hot sun or while grilling out on a Saturday afternoon!

What you'll need:

- 1 pitcher of iced sun tea
- 1 pitcher of pink lemonade
- 1 lemon, sliced into wedges
- Ice cubes
- 1 Empty pitcher

Instructions:

Prepare 1 pitcher of your preferred brand of sun tea, following the instructions on the package. Prepare 1 pitcher of your preferred brand of pink lemonade according to the instructions on the package. Pour half of the tea into the empty pitcher so you have two pitchers half filled with tea. Add ice to each pitcher of tea. Top off each pitcher of tea with pink lemonade. Stir or shake each pitcher to mix tea and lemonade well. Pour into glasses over ice. Garnish with lemon wedges. Enjoy!

Handling the Heat; Summer Outdoor Industries Face Unique Safety Hazards

The long sunny days and warm breezes of summer, that most Minnesotans dream of all winter long, are finally here as June turns into July. In addition to weekends spent on the lake, summer also means that seasonal outdoor industries, like landscaping and construction, are booming. As an employer or worker in such an industry, summer can be a very profitable time. Yet, if you are not properly prepared to work in the summer heat, it can be also be a dangerous one.

Sunshine and high temperatures create a number of outdoor workplace safety hazards that are not normally experienced at other times of the year. According to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), it is important that both employers and employees in outdoor industries are well aware of the signs of summer injuries such as: sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion, and know

the proper steps to take in the incidence of one of these injuries.

In fact, OSHA reports that on May 4, 2006 a New Orleans worker's life was saved by his safety educated co-workers who recognized the signs of heat stroke and treated the injured worker according to an OSHA QuickCard until paramedics arrived at the worksite. "If treatment had had been delayed 15 minutes he might have died," OSHA reports.

In order to assist outdoor workers in avoiding potentially fatal outcomes, Award Staffing has compiled information on recognizing and responding to outdoor work safety hazards like sunburn and heat stroke. Share this information with your outdoor employees and co-workers to ensure a safe work environment this summer.

(Safety continued on page 3...)

Award's Employment Trivia Challenge

Take Award's brief quiz to see if you are an employment fact whiz:

1. How many workers are employed by staffing companies daily?
 - a) 290,000
 - b) 2.9 million
 - c) 7 million
2. What is the leading reason both workers and companies choose to work with staffing agencies?
 - a) Flexibility
 - b) Fear of commitment
 - c) Higher Wages
3. **True or False:** The purpose of Worker's Compensation Insurance is to protect both the employer and the employee.

(Quiz continued on page 2...)

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(...Quiz continued from page 1)

4. **True or False:** The current minimum wage in Minnesota is \$6.15 an hour.
5. **True or False:** OSHA was created in 1970 by president Nixon to ensure worker job satisfaction.
6. **True or False:** If state and federal law regarding employee compensation differ, the law resulting in higher pay for the employee applies.

Quiz Answers:

1. **b) 2.9 million workers** are employed by staffing companies daily.
2. The number one reason workers and companies choose to work with a staffing agency is **a) flexibility**. Working with a staffing agency allows workers to obtain good paying positions and benefits while maintaining complete control over the days and shifts they choose to work. Employers benefit from the flexibility of working with a contingent workforce because they are able to bring on additional workers when their production schedule demands without having to face the expensive costs of recruiting, hiring, and payrolling employees that are needed only during busy times of the year.
3. **True**. The purpose of Worker's Compensation Insurance is to protect both the employee and employer in the event of an accident. Worker's Compensation protects the employee by reducing the burden of proving their injury was work related and providing compensation for the loss of wages due to the injury. Limited financial exposure and protection from lawsuits over employee pain and suffering are benefits employers gain from Worker's Compensation Insurance.
4. **True**. Minimum wage for large employers in Minnesota was changed from \$5.15 to \$6.15 as of August 1, 2005.
5. **False**. OSHA, which stands for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, was created by Congress under the Occupational Safety and Health Act to help ensure worker safety and health by creating and promoting safer work environments. President Nixon signed the bill on December 29, 1970.
6. **True**. When federal and state laws regarding minimum wages conflict, the law that results in a higher wage for the employee always prevails.

Quiz Scores

6 Correct- Congratulations! You are a staffing and employment trivia whiz!
4-5 Correct- Good Job! You are extremely knowledgeable regarding important facts of employment.
2-3 Correct- Average. You may want to brush up on some of your employee wage and compensation facts.
0-1 Correct- Improve your score by visiting websites such as: www.dol.gov, www.bls.gov, and www.osha.gov to learn more important facts that every employer should know!

Sources of information for this quiz include:

Frequently Asked Questions (on About OSHA webpage). The U.S. Department of Labor. Online.
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/as/opa/osha-faq.html>. 29 June 2006.

Berchem, Stephen P. *American Staffing 2006 Annual Economic Analysis*. The American Staffing Association. Online. <http://www.americanstaffing.net/statistics/economic2006.cfm>. 29 June 2006.

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(...Safety continued from page 1)

Sunburn

Strong summer sun rays and extended periods of exposure to direct sunlight are the cause of one of the most common summer outdoor injuries...sunburn. The sun emits

Ultraviolet (UV radiation) that causes an individual's skin to burn from as little as 30 minutes of exposure to the sun. Sunburn and prolonged exposure to the sun can cause a number of injuries including: discomfort, premature aging of the skin, sun poisoning, cataracts, skin cancer, and, in severe cases, death.

Tips to avoid sunburn at an outdoor work site:

- Apply sunscreen, with an SPF of 30 or higher, periodically throughout the day. Check the sun protection product's label for specific instructions.
- Wear a hat and sunglasses to minimize face and eye exposure to the sun.
- If possible, take periodic breaks from direct sunlight.
- If possible, move your work to a shaded area.
- If possible, avoid the sun's rays when they are strongest from 10am to 4 pm.

Signs of sunburn:

- Red or burnt skin
- Blisters
- Peeling (occurs about 4-7 days after initial burn)
- Dehydration
- Chills
- Dizziness
- Fever (in severe cases)
- Nausea (in severe cases)
- Vomiting (in severe cases)

How to treat sunburn:

- Take aspirin, ibuprofen, or a similar pain relief medication to alleviate pain.
- Apply a cold compress to the affected area (visit: http://www.emedicinehealth.com/sunburn/page6_em.htm for a variety of sunburn compress suggestions).
- Soak sunburned skin in a cold bath.
- Apply moisturizing lotion with soothing aloe to sunburned skin.
- Stay out of the sun until the burn heals.

-In severe cases of sunburn, see a doctor or medical professional who can prescribe more aggressive treatments to take care of sunburn.

"If treatment (for heat stroke) had been delayed 15 minutes he might have died."

Heat Exhaustion & Heat Stroke

High temperatures and humidity are the cause of a summer injury of a different variety. Both heat exhaustion and heat stroke can occur when an individual is exposed to heat and humidity for an extended period of time.

Heat exhaustion occurs when a person's body responds to high temperatures by sweating and then becoming dehydrated due to loss of fluids.

Heat stroke occurs when an individual's "...cooling system, which is controlled by the brain, has stopped working, and the internal temperature has risen to the point where brain damage or damage to other internal organs may result," according to Medicine and Consumer Health Report. Heat Stroke is a very serious condition, and, if not responded to immediately, can result in death.

Tips to avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke:

- Drink plenty of water periodically throughout the day.
- Wear light colored clothing, in a non-synthetic fabric, like cotton, that breathes easily.
- Take frequent breaks in a cool shaded area.
- Avoid consuming salt, alcohol, sugar and caffeine. Consumption of any of these things increases your chances of becoming dehydrated.
- Check any medications you are taking to see if they react with high temperatures or cause dehydration. If they do, check with your doctor to learn how to respond to such occurrences.

Signs of heat exhaustion:

- Skin pales and is cool and moist to the touch.
- Excessive sweating
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Headache

- Nausea
- Weakness
- Extreme thirst
- Elevated body temperature (100° F or higher)
- Quickened Pulse

How to treat heat exhaustion:

- Move victim to a cool, shaded area.
- Give the victim fluids containing electrolytes, such as Gatorade or similar sports drinks.
- Remove excess layers of clothing.
- Do not give the victim caffeinated or alcoholic beverages.
- If the victim is experiencing any of the following symptoms: loss of consciousness, shortness of breath, abdominal pain, or a deteriorating mental state, seek professional medical attention immediately!

"If...someone is the victim of heat stroke, seek professional medical help immediately!"

Signs of heat stroke:

- Confusion
- Delirium
- Fainting
- Flushed skin that is hot and dry to the touch.
- Hyperventilation
- A rise in blood pressure, followed by a drop in blood pressure
- Elevated body temperature (can reach as high as 105° F)

How to treat heat stroke:

- If you suspect someone is the victim of heat stroke, seek professional medical help immediately! Heat stroke is a dangerous injury and needs to be treated by trained medical professionals to avoid severe consequences or death.
- While waiting for medical professionals to arrive, move the victim to a cool place, alternately moisten their skin with lukewarm water then blow it dry with a fan, and give them fluids if they will take them.

OSHA Heat Stress Quick Card

OSHA provides a handful of Quick Cards, that instruct workers how to act in the case of an unsafe workplace situation. Award Staffing has taken the liberty of printing a color copy of OSHA's Heat Stress Quick card for you to have to make your summer outdoor workplace a safer one. Cut the card out, laminate it, and keep it on hand at your outdoor work site to help prevent and treat heat related injuries.

Additional copies of the card can be downloaded at: <http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list>. The card is free and available in both English and Spanish. OSHA recommends that employers of outdoor workers provide a copy to all employees who may be exposed to high temperature work environments.

Remember, as enjoyable as the balmy summer weather can be, it can also be a work safety and health hazard. Know the facts about recognizing sun and heat related injuries so you don't get burned this summer!

OSHA QUICK CARD™

Protect Yourself Heat Stress



When the body is unable to cool itself by sweating, several heat-induced illnesses such as heat stress or heat exhaustion and the more severe heat stroke can occur, and can result in death.

Factors Leading to Heat Stress

High temperature and humidity; direct sun or heat; limited air movement; physical exertion; poor physical condition; some medicines; and inadequate tolerance for hot workplaces.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- Headaches, dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting.
- Weakness and moist skin.
- Mood changes such as irritability or confusion.
- Upset stomach or vomiting.

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

- Dry, hot skin with no sweating.
- Mental confusion or losing consciousness.
- Seizures or fits.

Preventing Heat Stress

- Know signs/symptoms of heat-related illnesses; monitor yourself and coworkers.
- Block out direct sun or other heat sources.
- Use cooling fans/air-conditioning; rest regularly.
- Drink lots of water; about 1 cup every 15 minutes.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, or heavy meals.

What to Do for Heat-Related Illness

- Call 911 (or local emergency number) at once.

While waiting for help to arrive:

- Move the worker to a cool, shaded area.
- Loosen or remove heavy clothing.
- Provide cool drinking water.
- Fan and mist the person with water.

For more complete information:

OSHA Occupational Safety and Health Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA

OSHA 3115-001010E

Sources of information for Award's Summer Safety Hazards Newsletter include:

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke. eMedicine Health. Online. http://www.emedicinehealth.com/heat_exhaustion_and_heat_stroke/article_em.htm. 29 June 2006.

OSHA Products Available to Keep Workers Safe in Hot Weather; Louisiana Tower Crew Uses OSHA Heat Stress QuickCard to Help Save Co-Workers Life. OSHA Trade News Release. U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Communications. Online. 28 June 2006.

Sunburn. eMedicine Health. Online. http://www.emedicinehealth.com/sunburn/article_em.htm. 29 June 2006.

Working Outdoors in Warm Climates. OSHA Fact Sheet. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Online. http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/working_outdoors.pdf. 29 June 2006.

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