



City Safe

A Guide To Assist In Training Employees About:

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Occupational Safety & Health Assistance
for Public Sector Employers in Kansas

Number 5

by
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City Safe is a publication of the League of Kansas Municipalities and the Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust for the purpose of educating and informing cities about loss control methods and risk management. Contents herein are not intended to provide specific legal or medical advice. Readers should seek advice on specific concerns from a qualified professional.

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**Occupational Safety & Health Assistance
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Kansas Department of Human Resources

Occupational safety and health activities are conducted by the Kansas Department of Human Resources (KDHR) under K.S.A. 44-636. This statute grants the Secretary of Human Resources the power to (1) inspect workplaces for safety and health conditions; (2) make findings thereon; (3) notify those in control of the workplace of any findings or unsafe or insanitary conditions; and (4) order corrective measures. Functioning under the Secretary's authority, the Industrial Safety & Health Section of the Division of Workers Compensation of KDHR conducts safety and health inspections of public sector agencies including cities/municipalities, counties, school districts, fire departments, state agencies, etc. A report or notice is issued which identifies hazardous conditions as defined by a national consensus standard and recommends an appropriate abatement protocol to be completed in 60 days. Although a formal hearing can be requested and scheduled on any findings, the preferred approach is to modify the recommendation if a reasonable abatement alternative is suggested and to extend the abatement date so as not to present a hardship for the agency involved.

National consensus standards are used to identify hazardous conditions. The "standard" is an educational tool and the "inspector" is a consultant in his evaluations so that KDHR fulfills an important responsibility in promoting and educating the public in safety measures under K.S.A. 75-5740. National consensus standards which may be cited include but are not limited to those from the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), etc. It is true that OSHA standards are often cited but these are minimum safety and health standards. Many employers opt for a more protective level of safety when advised of this fact. This is especially true with regard to chemical exposures where the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists or National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health exposure values take precedence over OSHA Permissible Exposure Limits. Here is one reason why KDHR is interested in teaming with employ-

ers in interpreting relevant standards to provide the highest level of protection available. KDHR has not promulgated a set of regulations for enforcement because of the desire to reference the most current and protective standard. Compliance is required based on an order relative to a particular set of facts which pose a hazard to employees as identified by a competent and objective inspector under K.S.A. 77-415(4).

There is provision in K.S.A. 44-636 for assessment of penalties, but KDHR's current mission is to avoid such actions. Public sector employers have always voluntarily abated identified hazards. The record over the last 4 years is quite impressive as illustrated in the following table:

Fiscal Year	Inspections Completed	Hazards Abated	Employees Assisted
FY1998	350	5,101	16,000+
FY1999	350	5,001	16,300+
FY2000	268	2,294	12,412
FY2001	359	2,880	14,733

All of this work was done without assessing fines or penalties which is a positive benefit for all public sector employers and employees.

Employers who are inspected receive a report which identifies the hazardous condition, the relevant standard, and an abatement recommendation. As might be expected when dealing with such a large and diverse population as the cities of Kansas, a variety of standards are frequently cited. Some common citations are included in the table below:

Condition	Standard
No written hazard communication program.	29 CFR 1910.1200(e)(1)
No Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.	29 CFR 1910.1030(c)(1)(i)
Unguarded fan blades.	29 CFR 1910.212(a)(5)
Unguarded pulleys less than 7' from the floor.	29 CFR 1910.219(d)(1)
Unlighted exit signs.	29 CFR 1910.37(q)(7)
Unmarked breakers in electrical panels.	29 CFR 110.303(f)
Ungrounded equipment.	29 CFR 1910.304(f)(5)
Unused openings in electrical boxes.	29 CFR 1910.305(b)(1)
Uninspected fire extinguishers.	29 CFR 1910.157(e)(3)
Bench grinder missing tool rest.	29 CFR 1910.215(a)(4)
Side grinding on wheels not designed for that purpose.	ANSI B7.1-1988, para. 9.11
Plastic discharge pipe on boiler/water heater	Kansas Boiler Safety Act, KSA 44-913 et seq., 49-52-6(h)(3)

For further information regarding the Kansas Department of Human Resources Industrial Safety & Health Section, contact Rudy Leutzinger, Administrator.

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City Safe would like to thank Mr. Kotich and Mr. Leutzinger for their cooperation & assistance in this issue of City Safe.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

It's that time of year again, when temperatures and humidity rise to dangerous levels. The balance of this City Safe will be dedicated to addressing what to look for in employees who may succumb to heat exhaustion more rapidly than others, and in the event someone does become effected, what needs to be done in terms of first aid. In 2000, 21 workers died, and 2,554 others experienced heat related occupational injuries and illnesses serious enough to miss work.

The physical condition of an employee plays a large role in how heat exhaustion will effect them. If the person is taking certain medications, lacks conditioning or is obese, pregnant, or taking inadequate rest periods, he/she will be more likely to succumb to heat stress.

Several precautions can be taken to protect your employees from heat exhaustion.

- 1) Train all workers to recognize the signs of heat exhaustion, and be sure they know who is trained to administer first aid;
- 2) Work in pairs;
- 3) Help workers adjust by assigning lighter work loads in the first 5 - 7 days of intense heat;
- 4) Encourage workers to drink plenty of water - approximately 1 cup of cool water every 15-20 minutes regardless of thirst. Avoid alcohol and caffeine;

- 5) Encourage workers to wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing (within any applicable dress codes);
- 6) Use general ventilation and spot cooling at points of high heat production;
- 7) Alternate work and rest periods, with rest periods in a cooler area. Shorter, more frequent work-rest cycles work best;
- 8) Monitor temperatures, humidity, and workers' responses to heat at least hourly;

If an employee does become heat exhausted, the following first aid precautions should be taken:

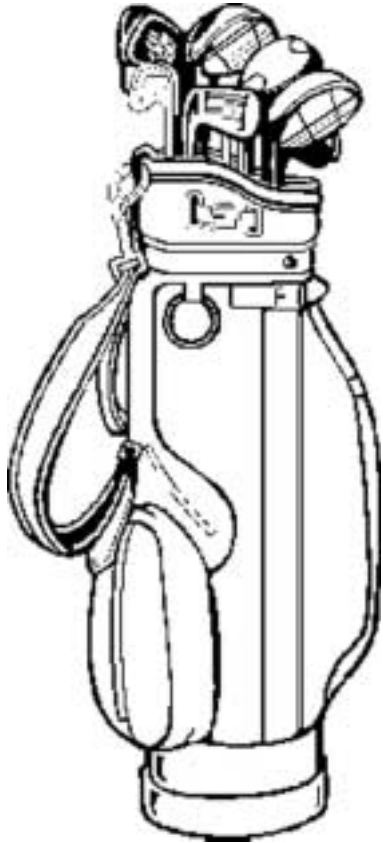
- 1) Move the individual to a cool, shaded area;
- 2) Loosen and remove heavy clothing;
- 3) Have the person drink cool water (a small cup every 15 minutes if they are not feeling sick in the stomach);
- 4) Try to cool the person by using a fan, cool spray mist, water, or wet cloth;
- 5) If the person does not feel better within a few minutes, call for emergency help.



Lastly, in the event of a heat exhaustion occurrence, exercise care, caution, and discretion. If you can afford to give the individual an additional rest period, and the individual would clearly benefit from the additional rest, then please allow them to do so.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

Do you have issues you want to see covered in City Safe?
If so, contact Bret Glendening by phone at (785) 354-9565
or by e-mail at bglendening@ink.org.



Get your golf clubs ready . . .

KMIT Golf Classic

Saturday, October 12th
Hidden Lakes Golf Course
Wichita

Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust

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