

OSHA Extends Heat Hazard Program: Employers Should Act Before Summer Sets In

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Takeaways

- OSHA recently extended its National Emphasis Program on outdoor and indoor workplace heat-related hazards to 04.08.26.
- Employers should take this opportunity to review and update their workplace safety and heat illness prevention programs.
- Taking proactive steps can help employers reduce risks, demonstrate good faith compliance and prepare for potential OSHA inspections.

Related link

- [National Emphasis Program – Outdoor and Indoor Heat-Related Hazards](#)

Article

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has extended its [National Emphasis Program on Outdoor and Indoor Heat-Related Hazards](#) (NEP) to April 8, 2026. The NEP was set to expire on April 8, 2025. This extension allows OSHA to continue its efforts in identifying and addressing heat-related injuries and illnesses in workplaces.

The NEP enforcement initiative targets industries and workplaces — both indoor and outdoor — where workers are at increased risk of heat-related illnesses. Targeted sectors include manufacturing, wholesalers, restaurants, retail, bakeries, landscaping, and construction. OSHA launched the NEP in 2022 in response to rising rates of heat-related injuries and fatalities and as part of a broader initiative to address the effects of climate change on worker safety. The NEP directs OSHA compliance safety and health officers to proactively conduct inspections and provide outreach to employers in high-risk industries, especially during warmer months.

OSHA says its review of the NEP determined the program was successful in identifying, targeting, and providing outreach and compliance assistance to indoor and outdoor workplaces with heat-related hazards. As a result of these efforts, OSHA says it helped protect nearly 1,400 employees from ongoing exposure to hazardous heat conditions. Between April 8, 2022, and Dec. 29, 2024, the agency conducted approximately 7,000 heat-related inspections, issued 60 heat citations, and issued 1,392 Hazard Alert Letters to employers. This is a significant increase compared to data collected between 2015 and 2020.

The extension of the NEP reinforces OSHA's long-term commitment to addressing heat hazards in the workplace. Regional offices and OSHA-approved State Plan Programs will continue to conduct programmed and unprogrammed inspections, with a particular emphasis on fatality inspections and complaints or referrals that allege potential heat-

related hazards. Under OSHA's directive, compliance support and outreach efforts are also extended.

Employers should take this opportunity to review their workplace safety programs and ensure they have a comprehensive heat illness prevention program in place. The program may include such measures as:

- Providing cool drinking water and shaded rest areas;
- Implementing an acclimatization plan for new or returning workers;
- Conducting regular training on recognizing and responding to heat stress symptoms;
- Monitoring environmental conditions; and
- Scheduling rest breaks during high heat periods.

While OSHA is still working on a proposed federal heat plan, many State Plan States have already created a heat illness standard or are in the process of promulgating state-specific heat standards.

The NEP provides a framework that companies can use to help plan across the country. With summer approaching, now is the time to act. Proactively implementing or updating your heat safety program can reduce risks, demonstrate good faith compliance, and prepare your workplace for potential OSHA inspections.

To understand how OSHA's directive might affect your organization, contact a Jackson Lewis attorney for insights and guidance.

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