

OSHA's Proposed Heat Standard Could Alter the Way Your Business Operates

OSHA's proposed [Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings](#) standard was recently published in the Federal Register. The proposed standard affects employers across nearly every industry and will likely directly or indirectly impact your business. In 2022, OSHA issued a National Heat Emphasis Program (NEP), which resulted in increased inspections and penalty collections.

Currently, OSHA does not have a heat standard. Instead, the agency uses the General Duty Clause (Section 5-A-1) to protect employees from heat injuries and illnesses. The General Duty Clause requires employers to provide a place of employment that is "free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees."

The proposed **Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings** is referred to as a "Programmatic" standard, meaning employers must develop a plan to evaluate and control heat hazards in their workplace. Heat conditions would trigger tiered mitigation measures. The US Department of Labor published an approximately 30-minute video on YouTube outlining the proposed standard, titled [Proposed Rule for the Prevention of Heat Illnesses and Injuries](#). Federal OSHA encourages employers to watch the video and then comment on how the standard would impact their business. After the comment period closes, OSHA will review the comments and, based on your feedback, may revise the proposed rule.

How and Why Businesses Should Comment on the Proposed Heat Standard

Employers can visit the OSHA website at <https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/OSHA-2021-0009-4761>. This proposed standard could significantly impact how businesses manage and mitigate heat-related risks, making it essential for employers to understand the proposed heat standard.

By providing feedback, employers can contribute to developing a standard that reflects the real-world challenges and considerations they face in managing heat-related hazards in the workplace. This input is crucial for OSHA to create a balanced and well-informed rule that promotes worker safety and health while considering the impact on businesses.

Leveraging the Illinois On-Site

The Illinois Department of Labor's On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Program can be an invaluable resource for businesses looking to mitigate not just heat but also a panoply of hazards in their workplace. This program, administered by the Illinois Department of Labor, offers free and confidential assistance to small and medium-sized businesses, creating a safer and healthier work environment and potentially lowering your workers' compensation insurance. Employers can proactively address heat-related risks by leveraging the resources and expertise offered by this program. Visit Worksafe.illinois.gov or contact Harry (Hap) Hileman with the Illinois Department of Labor at 217-992-2111 for more information about this free and confidential program brought to you by the State of Illinois.



ON-SITE

Safety & Health Consultation Program

