

Heat Stress Alert

(to be posted where the Humidex is greater than 30 Indoors or 36 Outdoors)

Saint Mary's University recognizes the potential problems caused by high temperatures in the work environment or associated with sports activities. Heat Stress Guidelines have been established to prevent the occurrence of heat related illness. These Guidelines are based on a Humidex value which is calculated from a combination of air temperature (dry bulb) and relative humidity and are modified to consider activity level, clothing and direct sunlight.

If any time, you believe your physical health and safety is being affected by the workplace environment or task you are performing, contact your direct supervisor immediately.

There are a number of things that you can do to feel more comfortable and to avoid heat stress:

- Drink plenty of cool water in frequent small portions.
- Drinks specially designed to replace body fluids and electrolytes, such as sports drinks, may be taken in moderation, and may be of benefit to those engaging in high levels of physical activity, but remember that they may add unnecessary salt or sugar to your diet.
- Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol, as they dehydrate the body.
- Organize your duties so that activities involving more physical effort are done in the cooler parts of the day and avoid overtime work when possible.
- Take rest breaks, preferably in a cooler area, if available.
- If the dry bulb temperature is below 35°C and the relative humidity is less than 70%, fans may help.
- Wear loose light clothing made of fabrics which will absorb sweat, such as cotton. When outdoors, wear a hat or other head covering.
- Stay out of direct sunlight when possible.
- Become aware of the symptoms and health effects of heat stress.

Further information on heat stress topics is available on the Saint Mary's University OHS Site: <http://www.smu.ca/administration/ohs/>

- Saint Mary's Heat Stress Guidelines Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety: Thermal Comfort and Heat Stress
- Occupational Health and Safety: Indoor Heat Stress Warning Notice
- Occupational Health and Safety: Outdoor Heat Stress Warning Notice
- Occupational Health and Safety: Health Effects of Heat Stress
- Occupational Health and Safety: First Aid Treatment of Heat Stress