



Outdoor-Based Business

Sun Protection Policy Guidelines

Introduction

Skin cancer is considered epidemic by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Over one million Americans are expected to get skin cancer this year. That's more people than the grand total of all who will get cancers of the prostate, breast, lung, and colon. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight causes 90 percent of all non-melanoma skin cancer. Risk for skin cancer can be greatly reduced when certain precautions are practiced.

It is prudent for safety staff to establish a sun-safety policy to protect employees from excessive sunlight, and to avoid potential liability and litigation stemming from employees experiencing blistering sunburns, dehydration, heat illness, and skin cancer. This document is designed to assist safety personnel as they create sun-protection guidelines for their specific setting.

Some statements presented in this sample policy may prove impractical and may need to be modified or totally omitted from the guidelines administrators develop. The goal is to adopt as many of the sun-safety principles and strategies as possible, according to their feasibility.

Following are the basic tactics for preventing skin cancer. On the next page the sun-safety tips are translated into guidelines for outdoor activities.

Basic Personal Strategies for Preventing Skin Cancer

1. Reduce exposure to sunlight between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the winter), as practical.
2. Wear full-coverage clothing when outside in sunlight including four-inch full-brimmed hats, long-sleeve shirts, and full-length pants (weather permitting).
3. Use sunglasses that state they protect from 99-100 percent of UVA and UVB. A UV-protective coating can be added to prescription glasses.
4. Apply full-spectrum (UVA & UVB) sunscreen - SPF 30 or higher - to exposed skin, 15 minutes before going outside in the sun.
5. Use lip balm with a SPF of 30 or higher.
6. Seek **shade** when outside in the sun.



Cover up!





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Suggested Guidelines for Outdoor Work or Recreation

1. For all outdoor labor occurring on sunny (non-rainy) days – especially between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. – staff will be encouraged to:
 - A. Work in shaded areas, when practical (Example: Incorporate large umbrellas at flagging stations).
 - B. Wear full-coverage clothing that includes:
 - (1) four-inch or more full-brimmed hats that create a shadow which completely covers the head, face, and neck. (Flappy-jacks, patterned somewhat like a baseball hat with neck flaps, may sometimes prove a practical solution.)
 - (2) long-sleeve shirts and full-length pants made of tightly-woven fabric that is lightweight.
 - C. Wear sunglasses that protect from 99-100 percent of UVA & UVB (full-spectrum).
 - D. Fifteen minutes before going outside, apply a SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum (UVA/UVB), water-resistant sunscreen to exposed skin. Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours.
 - E. Use lip balm with a SPF of 30 or higher.
2. Sun-protection training and materials will be provided to staff encouraging them to practice sun safety both on the job and during outdoor pastimes. Sun-safety measures will be integrated in the employee or operations manual.
3. These guidelines will be communicated and reinforced to employees through verbal reminders, posters, signs, pamphlets, notices, payroll stuffers, newsletters, and tailgate meetings, etc.
4. Outdoor employees will receive an annual allowance of \$_____ to purchase sun-safety items such as sunscreen, wide brims for attaching to hard hats, and UV-protective sunglasses, etc.
5. Safety staff will conduct an annual review of the company's sun-safety policy and the degree to which employees practice skin cancer prevention behaviors.

Additional Skin Cancer Prevention Resources

1. UV Index: The UV Index predicts the concentration of ultraviolet radiation that will hit the indicated zip code area on a given day. The higher the number, the stronger UV rays will be. This index can be daily communicated to outdoor workers to remind them to take sun-protection precautions. To locate the UV Index, go to _____. Then:
 - A. Input the desired 5-digit zip code.
 - B. Input your state abbreviation.
 - C. Click on "Search."An interpretive chart will explain the significance of the generated number.
2. OSHA provides an on-line pocket card entitled "Protecting Yourself in the Sun." Download at _____