

# THE SAFE STEP

*Your connection to protecting those who improve your community*



## PREVENTING, RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO HEAT STRESS



### The Problem

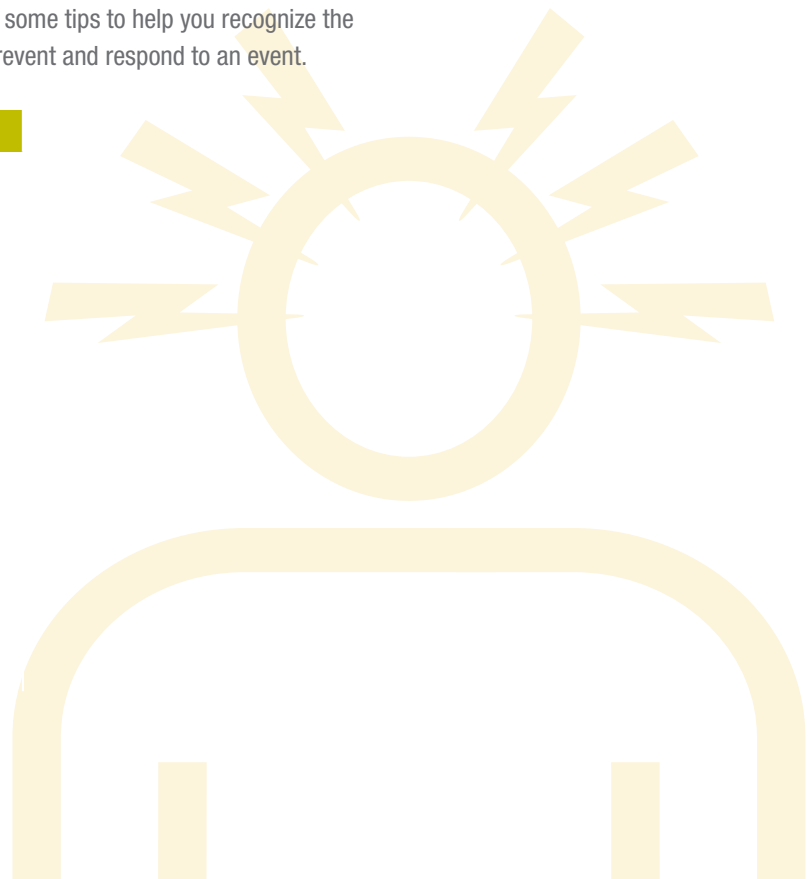
According to the National Weather Service, heat-related illness is a leading cause of weather-related deaths. The rising number of heat waves have increased the demand on our nonprofit and social service organizations to protect their communities. From outreach programs to help make sure homeless populations and low-income families stay hydrated to protecting campers and young sports participants, the importance of preventing and responding to heat stress are all the more prevalent.

### The Solution

Great American Specialty Human Services has put together some tips to help you recognize the signs and symptoms of heat stress and measures to help prevent and respond to an event.

#### Suggested to DO

-  **Fluid Replenishment** – Be sure to hydrate before, during and after an activity. According to the CDC, water is generally sufficient for hydration. Energy drinks and alcohol should be avoided. Salt can generally be replenished through regular meals and snacks throughout the day. Plenty of short water breaks should be taken on hotter days.
-  **Protective Clothing** – You can help beat the heat by utilizing reflective clothing and personal cooling devices such as cooling vests, cooling towels and hands-free personal fans.



## Suggested to DO



**Shade and Air-conditioning** – Be sure to set-up break areas in the shade or air-conditioned spaces when available. Utilize reflective screens and equipment like fans to help airflow in shaded areas. Contact local authorities for state of emergencies and to see if any onsite services or equipment are required or available.



**Plan Activities** – Schedule events and activities during the cooler parts of the day. Try to limit activity when the sun is the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.



**Training** - Make sure volunteers, staff and participants are aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses and the need for frequent fluid intake.

## Signs and Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion



- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale and clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Fainting

## Responding to a Heat Exhaustion Event



- Move the person exhibiting sign and symptoms to a cool place immediately
- The person exhibiting symptoms should loosen tight clothing if possible
- Apply cool, wet cloths to skin
- Sip water
- Seek immediate medical help if:
  - Participant is vomiting
  - Symptoms get worse
  - Symptoms last longer than 1 hour

## Great American can Help!

Check out our all-new Risk Portal for information such as this and other resources that can help you manage your risks:  
<https://gaig-shs.riskresourcesportal.org/>

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat>

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/UserFiles/works/pdfs/2017-126.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html>

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