

Pinnacol Pointers for Safety Group Programs

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Protection from Ultraviolet Rays

July is UV Safety Month, so there's no better time to make sure your employees are protected from the sun. Here in Colorado the sun is at least a mile closer to us, increasing the risk of sunburn and skin cancer, especially for employees that work outside. Here are three ways you can reduce the chances of sun-related injuries this summer:

1. Provide sun protection.

You probably already provide your employees with sun protection, but it never hurts to up the ante. Using protective clothing, eyewear and hats to shade your face, ears and neck while using a sunscreen of at least SPF 15 can reduce the risk of sun-related injuries. Use the shady areas around your work site as shelter to rest and reapply sunscreen. If there isn't enough shade around your work site, you should modify the area by providing tents, cooling stations or other shelter from the sun. Take note that covering shiny surfaces can decrease UV reflection as well.

2. Add sun safety to your workplace safety policy.

To further educate your employees about the hazards of the sun, weave sun safety resources into your already existing workplace safety and wellness programs. Make sure your employees understand the risks and the symptoms of overexposure to the sun so they can take action quickly.

3. Teach your employees.

Make sure your employees understand sun safety facts and where they can find the resources they need to get more information. For example, did you know that UV rays from the sun are strongest during midday, near the equator, during summer months and at high altitudes? Knowing this can help employees take action to protect themselves. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends training employees to use the UV Index to identify when levels are dangerous, and then reschedule work time accordingly.

For more information on how to avoid UV and sun-related injuries, visit the Resources page on Pinnacol.com. Policyholders have access to a variety of complimentary materials including a "Sun Safety" poster that's available in English and Spanish. Want to talk with someone live? Call our Safety On Call hotline at 303.361.4700 or 888.501.4752.

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