

Security Spotlight

An informational Guide for Securitas Canada Clients and Employees



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Safety Tips For the Summer Heat



Hot summer months pose special hazards for those who work or spend an extended amount of time outdoors. It is not the heat alone that poses the threat, but the combination of high temperatures, humidity and direct sun exposure – what weather forecasters refer to as the “heat index” – that contributes to heat stress. Anyone who spends time working or playing outside in the dog days of summer should protect him or herself against heat, sun exposure and other hazards.

Stay Hydrated

For those working outdoors in the heat with elevated temperatures, experts recommend drinking about five to eight ounces of water every 15 to 20 minutes to stay sufficiently hydrated and maintain a safe core body temperature. Studies show that a person’s alertness and endurance are compromised after only one hour in extreme heat conditions.

After two hours, the effects of heat stress—which include cramps, fatigue, loss of strength and reduced coordination—may set in.

To maintain proper hydration, drink before, during and after exercise to replace body fluids. By the time you feel thirsty, you’re already dehydrated. Water is best for hydration, but sports drinks, which contain electrolytes lost in perspiration, are an alternative.

Drink cool water, which is absorbed more quickly by the body than warm or very cold fluids. Avoid coffee, tea and alcoholic beverages, all of which act to dehydrate the body.

Shady Behavior

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation that causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure and whether the skin is protected. To block the sun’s harmful rays, cover up. Wear a wide brimmed hat and tightly woven clothing—preferably a long sleeved shirt and long pants. Try this test to gauge the protection offered by your clothing: If you can see your hand through the fabric, the garment offers minimal protection.

Eye protection is important, too. Wear UV-absorbent shades. Some studies have shown a greater incidence of cataracts among those who do not wear sunglasses in bright sunlight. Remember that your dress attire must be in compliance with your Post Orders and Securitas Canada policies.

Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30, and limit your exposure. UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Heat Wave

Summers in Canada can produce heat waves—several consecutive days of excessively high temperatures in a given geographical area of the country. Recognizing the potential harm from excessive heat, the Government of Canada developed heat warnings based on province, temperature and duration of high temperatures. Example, in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, a warning is issued by the Government of Canada when the humidex value or temperature is expected to reach 40 for at least one hour. This heat warning varies depending on where you live. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/meteo-weather/default.asp?lang=En&n=d9553ab5-1#heat>

By recognizing the first signs of heat exhaustion and responding appropriately, you can help protect yourself and others by preparing for excessive heat. Learn more about heat stress from the Government of Canada at:

https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/gl_heat.php

