

June 6-9, 2018

Crane Rental Association of Canada
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
www.crac-aclg.ca

June 18-19, 2018

Tower Cranes North America
Miami, FL
http://www.khl-tcna.com

June 25-29, 2018

Lift & Move USA/Skills USA Annual Convention
Louisville, KY
www.liftandmoveusa.com

September 26-28, 2018

SC&RA Crane & Rigging Workshop
Louisville, KY
www.scranet.org

October 2-4, 2018

Breakbulk Americas
George R. Brown Convention Center
Houston, TX
www.breakbulk.com

October 11, 2018

Lift & Move USA
NessCampbell Crane
Portland, OR
www.liftandmoveusa.com

October 14-17, 2018

AWRF Fall General Meeting
San Antonio, TX
www.awrf.org

December 4-6, 2018

Power Gen
Orlando, FL
www.power-gen.com

December 6, 2018

Lift & Move USA
Superior Cranes
Rockingham, NC
www.liftandmoveusa.com

January 3-6, 2019

SC&RA Board & Committee Meeting
Wailea, HI
www.scranet.org

February 19-22

Specialized Transportation Symposium
Houston, TX
www.scranet.org

The heat is on

Protecting your workers from complications of working in high heat.

Summer's here, which means warmer temperatures and a whole new list of risks to consider while working on a crane or rigging project. Chief among those risks? Heat.

As unbelievable as this sounds, heat is the number one cause of weather-related fatalities in the United States, despite the fact that most heat-related deaths are preventable. So as we transition to warmer temperatures from now through July and August, it's important to revisit your workplace Heat Illness Prevention Program to make absolute certain your employees are equipped to combat heat-related stress and illnesses.

If you don't have a Heat Illness Prevention Program, you need to create one. Prolonged exposure to heat can cause heat stroke and even death. There's also heightened risk for heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, disorders that can have damaging consequences and that are best avoided all together.

Employees who perform work in moderate to high temperatures or humid conditions, especially where increased heart rate and perspiration are concerned, (at some point this is most crane and rigging workers in the United States), must know the necessary information to recognize, understand and try to prevent the consequences of heat stress. Understanding what to look for and what to do can mean life and death.

According to OSHA, there are seven things you can do right now to ensure you are prepared for hot weather.

1 ESTABLISH A COMPLETE HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM. Heat-related illnesses can be prevented. Establishing good work practices, such as work/rest cycles, drinking water often, and providing an opportunity for workers to build up a level of tolerance to working in the heat should all be aspects of your Heat Illness Prevention Program.

2 WORKERS AND SUPERVISORS SHOULD BE TRAINED ABOUT THE HAZARDS OF HEAT EXPOSURE AND THEIR PREVENTION. Topics

should include risk factors for heat-related illness; different types of heat-related illness, including how to recognize signs and symptoms; heat-related illness prevention procedures; the importance of drinking small quantities of water often, etc.

3 PROVIDE VAST AMOUNTS OF COOL WATER TO WORKERS CLOSE TO THE WORK AREA.

At least one pint of water per hour is needed. Schedule water breaks.

4 MODIFY WORK SCHEDULES AND ARRANGE FREQUENT REST PERIODS WITH WATER BREAKS IN SHADED OR AIR-CONDITIONED AREAS.

Rather than being exposed to heat for extended periods of time, workers should be permitted to distribute the workload evenly over the day and incorporate work/rest cycles.

5 GRADUALLY INCREASE WORKLOADS AND ALLOW MORE FREQUENT BREAKS FOR WORKERS NEW TO THE HEAT OR THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN AWAY FROM WORK TO ADAPT TO WORKING IN THE HEAT (ACCLIMATIZATION). If possible,

physical demands should be reduced during hot weather and heavier work scheduled for cooler times of the day. Rotating job functions among workers can help minimize overexertion and heat exposure.

6 DESIGNATE A PERSON TO MONITOR CONDITIONS AND PROTECT WORKERS WHO ARE AT RISK OF HEAT STRESS. Workers should

watch out for each other for symptoms of heat-related illness and administer appropriate first aid to anyone who shows signs of developing a heat-related illness.

7 CONSIDER PROTECTIVE CLOTHING THAT PROVIDES COOLING. Thermally conditioned

clothing might be used for extremely hot conditions. For example, a garment with a self-contained air-conditioner in a backpack; a garment with a compressed air source that feeds cool air through a vortex tube; a plastic jacket with pockets that can be filled with ice.

Remember, when it comes down to it, none of this is optional. When summer comes knocking on your doors – no matter where you live – make sure your Heat Illness Prevention Program is realistic, and ready. ■

THE AUTHOR



Bill Smith, executive vice president, NBIS, is an expert on risk management and safe crane operations. He was a member of C-DAC, which assisted writing the OSHA Crane & Derricks Standard.