

River Delta Unified School District Heat Illness Prevention Plan

2024-25



**Prepared by:
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Program Administrator

River Delta Unified School District	
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Heat Illness Prevention Elements

Heat illness results when the body's internal temperature system is overworked. These procedures are designed to assist the district in reducing the risk of heat related illnesses and to ensure that emergency assistance is provided without delay.

The elements reflected within this Heat Illness Prevention Plan are those contained in Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3395 (T8 CCR 3395) and consist of the following:

- Procedures for the Provision of Water;
- Procedures for Access to Shade;
- Procedures for Monitoring the Weather;
- Procedures for Handling a Heat Wave;
- High heat Procedures;
- Procedures for Acclimatization;
- Procedures for Emergency response;
- Procedures for Handling a Sick Employee;
- Procedures for Employee and Supervisor Training;

Instructions: Implement the items below that are applicable to your work operations for water and shade provision, high heat procedures, acclimatization methods, and emergency procedures,

and add additional language to specify how your district intends to implement these provisions at the work site.

Procedures for the Provision of Water

Water is a key preventive measure to minimize the risk of heat related illnesses.

According to regulation 3395 (c), employees shall have access to potable drinking water (meeting the requirements of Sections 1524, 3363, and 3457, as applicable), including but not limited to the requirements that it be fresh, pure, suitably cold and provided to employees free of charge. The water shall be located as close as practicable to the areas where employees are working. Where the supply of water is not plumbed or otherwise continuously supplied, water shall be provided in sufficient quantity at the beginning of the work shift to provide one quart per employee per hour for drinking for the entire shift. Smaller quantities of water are allowed if effective procedures for replenishment during the shift are established to allow employees to drink one quart or more per hour. Frequent drinking of water shall be encouraged.

To ensure access to sufficient quantities of and to encourage frequent drinking of potable water, the following steps will be taken:

- All employees, whether working individually or in smaller crews, will have access to drinking water.
- Supervisor will provide repeated reminders to employees to drink frequently, and more water breaks will be provided.
- Where water fountains are not easily accessible, the district will provide water bottles, paper cones or bags of disposable cups and the necessary cup dispensers will be made available to employees and will be kept clean until used.
- As part of the Effective Replenishment Procedures, the water level of all containers will be checked periodically, supervisor/designated person will monitor water containers every 30 minutes, and employees are encouraged to report to supervisor/designated person low levels or dirty water.
- All water containers will be kept in a sanitary condition. Water from non-approved or non-tested water sources (e.g., untested wells) is not acceptable. If hoses or connections are used, they must be approved for potable drinking water systems, as shown on the manufacturer's label.

Procedures for Access to Shade

Access to rest and shade or other cooling measures are important preventive steps to minimize the risk of heat related illnesses.

Shade shall be present when the outside temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit in the work area.

Employees suffering from heat illness or believing a preventative recovery period is needed shall be provided access to an area with shade that is either open to the air or provided with ventilation or cooling for a period of no less than five minutes. Such access to shade shall be permitted at all times.

An individual employee who takes a preventative cool-down rest shall be monitored and asked if he or she is experiencing symptoms of heat illness; shall be encouraged to remain in the shade; and shall not be ordered back to work until any signs or symptoms of heat illness have abated. If the employee exhibits signs or reports symptoms of heat illness while taking a preventative cool-down rest, the employer shall provide appropriate first aid or emergency response.

To ensure access to shade and a preventative recovery period at all times, the following steps will be taken:

During days of anticipated heat, jobs requiring outside exposure will be conducted early in the day. When a modified or shorter work-shift is not possible, more water and rest breaks will be provided.

- Indoor jobs where air conditioning is available will be conducted in the late morning or afternoon when the temperatures are higher.
- Employees will be reminded regularly to take rest breaks in shaded and cooler areas.
- Supervisor will provide umbrellas, canopies, or other portable devices for shade within 50 - 100 yards of the work activity if other shade is not available.
- Drinking water will be available in shaded areas.

Note: The interior of a vehicle may not be used to provide shade unless the vehicle is air-conditioned, and the air conditioner is on.

Procedures for Monitoring the Weather

Prior to each workday, the forecasted temperature and humidity for the worksite will be reviewed and will be compared against the National Weather Service Heat Index to evaluate the risk level for heat illness. Determination will be made about whether employees will be exposed to a temperature and humidity characterized as either “extreme caution” or “extreme danger” for heat illnesses. It is important to note that the temperature at which these warnings occur must be lowered as much as 15 degrees if the employees are working in direct sunlight. Additional steps, such as those listed below, will be taken to address these hazards.

- Prior to each workday, the supervisor will monitor the weather (using <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/> or a simple thermometer, available at most hardware stores) at the worksite.
- A thermometer will be used at the job site to monitor for a sudden increase in temperature and to ensure that once the temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit, shade structures will be opened and made available to the employees. In addition, when the temperature

equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit, additional preventive measures, such as high-heat procedures, will be implemented.

- Stay alert to weather – make sure to monitor the weather and the specific locations where work activities are occurring. Continue to stay updated throughout the work shift on the changing air temperatures and other environmental factors. Use current weather information to make the appropriate adjustments in work activities throughout the workday.

Procedures for Handling a Heat Wave

For purposes of this section only, “heat wave” means any day in which the predicted high temperature for the day will be at least 80 degrees Fahrenheit and at least ten degrees Fahrenheit higher than the average high daily temperature in the preceding five days.

- Pre-shift meetings will be conducted to review high-heat procedures. Topics may include staying hydrated, taking cool-down rests, identifying the employees who will call for emergency medical services when needed, and discussing how employees will be observed.
- Co-workers will use a “buddy system” to watch each other closely for discomfort or symptoms of heat illness and to ensure that emergency procedures are initiated when someone displays possible signs or symptoms of heat illness.
- Changing work scheduling and assignments – supervisors may need to put into place one or more of the following additional measures:
 - Start the work shift even earlier in the day or later in the evening.
 - Cut work shifts short or stop work altogether.
 - Reduce the severity of work by scheduling slower paced less physically demanding work during the hot parts of the day and the heaviest work activities during the cooler parts of the day.

High-Heat Procedures

High Heat Procedures are additional preventive measures that this district will use when the temperature equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Frequent communication will be maintained with employees working by themselves or in smaller groups (via phone or two-way radio), to be on the lookout for possible symptoms of heat illness. The employee(s) and supervisor(s) will be in contact regularly and as frequently as possible throughout the day since an employee in distress may not be able to summon help on their own.
- Effective communication and direct observation for alertness and signs and symptoms of heat illness will be conducted frequently. When the supervisor is not available, a designated alternate responsible person must be assigned to look for signs and symptoms of heat illness. If a supervisor, designated observer, or any employee reports any signs or symptoms of heat illness in any employee, the supervisor or designated person will take immediate action commensurate with the severity of the illness (see [Emergency Response Procedures](#)).
- Extra vigilance – real time communication and the “buddy system” account for the whereabouts of employees at more frequent intervals throughout the work shift and at the end of the work shift.
- Employees are authorized to call for emergency services if needed.
- Employees will be reminded constantly throughout the work shift to drink plenty of water and take preventative cool-down rest breaks when needed.
- Additional water consumption – encourage employees to drink small quantities of water more frequently and have effective replenishment measures in place for the provision of extra drinking water to ensure that supplies are reliable.
- Additional cooling measures – employees may use alternative cooling measures in addition to shade (i.e. air conditioned rooms, misters, spraying themselves with water)
- Additional and/or longer rest breaks – employees may be allowed to take more frequent and longer breaks.

Procedures for Acclimatization

Acclimatization is the temporary adaptation of the body to work in the heat that occurs gradually when a person is exposed to it. In more common terms, the body needs time to adapt when temperatures rise suddenly, and an employee risks heat illness by not taking it easy when a heat wave or heat spike strikes, or when starting a new job that exposes the employee to heat to which the employee’s body hasn’t yet adjusted.

Inadequate acclimatization can be significantly more perilous in conditions of high heat and physical stress. Employers are responsible for the working conditions of their employees, and they must implement additional protective measures when conditions result in sudden exposure to heat their employees are not accustomed to.

To ensure that employees can acclimatize to the conditions, the following steps will be taken:

Employees are encouraged to take it easy when a heat wave strikes or when starting a job that newly exposes them to heat.

- New employees and those who have been newly assigned to a high heat area will be closely observed by the supervisor or designee for the first 14 days. The intensity of the work will be lessened during a two-week break-in period by using procedures such as scheduling slower paced, less physically demanding work during the hot parts of the day and the heaviest work activities during the cooler parts of the day (early morning or evening).
- The supervisor or the designee will be extra vigilant with new employees and stay alert to the presence of heat-related symptoms.
- During a heat wave, all employees will be observed closely (or maintain frequent communication via phone or radio) for possible symptoms of heat illness.
- Employees and supervisors will be trained on the importance of acclimatization, how it is developed, and how the district procedures address it.
- Supervisors will strive to find alternative tasks that lessen the intensity of employee's work during the heat wave and during the 2-week break-in period of new employees.

Procedures for Emergency Response

Emergency medical services will be provided as quickly as possible if an employee suffers heat illness.

If a supervisor observes, or any employee reports, any signs, or symptoms of heat illness in any employee, the supervisor shall take immediate action commensurate with the severity of the illness. If the signs or symptoms are indicators of severe heat illness (such as, but not limited to, decreased level of consciousness, staggering, vomiting, disorientation, irrational behavior, or convulsions), the employer must implement emergency response procedures.

An employee with signs or symptoms of heat illness will not be left alone or sent home without being offered first aid or provided with medical services.

If employees cannot reach emergency medical services directly (i.e. cell phone coverage is inadequate), the employer shall designate a person who can immediately contact emergency services on behalf of the employees. Employees must be able to contact this person quickly (i.e. by radio) to request emergency services be summoned.

To ensure that emergency medical services are provided without delay, the following steps will be taken:

- Supervisors and co-workers are encouraged never to discount any signs or symptoms they are observing or experiencing and will immediately report them.
- Supervisors will carry cell phones, radios, or other means of communication, to ensure that emergency services can be called and check that these are functional at the worksite prior to each shift.
- In the event of an emergency, supervisor or lead will call 911 and give clear and precise directions to the work site.
- Employees may contact emergency services directly and are not required to contact a supervisor first.
- When an employee shows symptom(s) of possible heat illness, emergency medical services will be called, and steps will immediately be taken to keep the stricken employee cool and comfortable to prevent the progression to more serious illness. Under no circumstances will the affected employee be left unattended.
- During a heat wave, heat spike, or hot temperatures, employees will be reminded and encouraged to immediately report to their supervisor any signs or symptoms they are experiencing.

Procedures for Handling a Sick Employee

When an employee displays possible signs or symptoms of heat illness, a trained first aid employee or supervisor will evaluate the sick employee and determine whether resting in the

shade and drinking cool water will suffice or if emergency service providers will need to be called. A sick employee will not be left alone in the shade, as they could take a turn for the worse!

To ensure that a sick employee is addressed without delay, the following steps will be taken:

- When an employee displays possible signs or symptoms of heat illness and no trained first aid employee or supervisor is available at the site, emergency service providers will be called.
- Emergency service providers will be called immediately if an employee displays signs or symptoms of severe heat illness (e.g., decreased level of consciousness, staggering, vomiting, disorientation, irrational behavior, incoherent speech, convulsions, red and hot face), does not look okay, or does not get better after drinking cool water and resting in the shade.

Procedures for Employee and Supervisor Training

To be effective, training must be understood by employees. Therefore, it must be given in a language and vocabulary the employees understand. Training records will be maintained and will include the date of the training, who performed the training, who attended the training, and the subject(s) covered.

- a. The environmental and personal risk factors for heat illness.
- b. The employer's procedures for complying with the requirements of this standard including, but not limited to, the employer's responsibility to provide water, shade, cool-down rests, and access to first aid as well as the employees' right to exercise their rights under this standard without retaliation.
- c. Supervisors will be trained in appropriate first aid and/or emergency response to different types of heat illness and made aware that heat illness may progress quickly from mild signs and symptoms to a serious, life-threatening illness.
- d. Supervisors will be instructed on how weather information will be used to modify work schedules, increase the number of water and rest breaks, or cease work early if necessary.
- e. All employees and supervisors will be trained prior to working outside. Training will include all aspects of implementing an effective Heat Illness Prevention Plan, including providing sufficient water, providing access to shade, high-heat procedures, emergency response procedures, and acclimatization procedures contained in the district's written plan. Employees and supervisors will also be trained on the environmental and personal risk factors of heat illness and the importance of immediately reporting signs and symptoms of heat illness.
- f. In addition to initial training, employees will be retrained annually.
- g. When the temperature is expected to exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit, communication methods will be used to review the weather report, reinforce heat illness prevention with all employees, provide reminders to drink water frequently, inform them that shade will be available, and remind them to be on the lookout for signs and symptoms of heat illness.
- h. New employees will be assigned a "buddy," or experienced co-worker, to ensure that they understand the training and follow district procedures.
- i. The importance of frequent consumption of small quantities of water when the work environment is hot, and employees are likely to be sweating more than usual in the performance of their duties;
- j. The importance to employees of immediately reporting to the employer, directly or through the employee's supervisor, symptoms or signs of heat illness in themselves, or in co-workers;
- k. The employer's procedures for responding to symptoms of possible heat illness, including how emergency medical services will be provided should they become necessary; The

employer's procedures for contacting emergency medical services, and if necessary, for transporting employees to a point where they can be reached by an emergency medical service provider.

- l. The employer's procedures for ensuring that, in the event of emergency, clear and precise directions to the work site can and will be provided as needed to emergency responders.
- m. The procedures the supervisor is to follow to implement the applicable provisions in this section.

To ensure appropriate training, the following steps will be taken:

- Employee training will be conducted as the weather begins to warm and on a weekly/daily basis during the hottest days and heat waves.
- Records of the training will be kept with the Injury and Illness Prevention Program documentation.

To report any concerns regarding our district's heat illness plan contact: Tammy Busch, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services at tbusch@rdusd.org or 707-374-1700