Heat Stress – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Key Hazards Related to Heat Stress in The Landscaping Industry

1. **Dehydration:** Extended exposure to high temperatures can lead to dehydration, which can reduce physical and cognitive function, increasing the risk of accidents.
2. **Heat Exhaustion:** Workers exposed to high temperatures for prolonged periods may experience heat exhaustion, characterized by heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, and nausea.
3. **Heat Stroke:** Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the body's temperature regulation fails, leading to symptoms such as confusion, loss of consciousness, and even death.
4. **Reduced Cognitive Function:** Heat stress can impair cognitive function, leading to decreased concentration, slower reaction times, and poor decision-making.
5. **Fatigue:** Fatigue increases the risk of musculoskeletal injuries due to weakened muscles and poor coordination.
6. **Heat-Related Illnesses and Chronic Conditions:** Repeated exposure to extreme heat can lead to long-term health issues, including chronic dehydration, kidney problems, and cardiovascular strain.

STATS

- (OSHA) reported that between 2003 and 2018, there were 815 worker deaths and over 70,000 serious injuries related to heat stress across all industries. Landscaping workers are significantly impacted by these conditions.
- The (CDC) indicates that the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector, which includes landscaping, has one of

the highest rates of heat-related fatalities. In 2019, the fatality rate for heat-related deaths in these sectors was 3.0 per 100,000 workers.

- While specific numbers for Canada are not as detailed, (CCOHS) emphasizes that outdoor workers, including landscapers, are at high risk of heat stress.
- Heatwaves can increase the incidence of heat-related illnesses by up to 10-15%, with outdoor workers, such as those in landscaping, being among the most vulnerable.
- From 2011 to 2021, there were 1,072 work-related fatalities reported in the landscaping and groundskeeping sector. Heat stress is a significant contributor to these fatalities.
- In 2019, there were 124 fatal work injuries specifically related to landscaping and groundskeeping. Heat stroke and heat exhaustion are leading causes of these heat-related fatalities.
- New hires in the landscaping industry are particularly vulnerable to heat stress. They represent approximately 70% of heat-related fatalities during their first week of work, as they may not be acclimatized to the physical demands of outdoor labor in hot conditions.