

Guidelines for Dealing with High Temperature Conditions in the Workplace

As a result of very hot weather and/or problems with ventilation systems, conditions in a building may arise that require active steps to maintain the comfort of employees and students and ensure their health and safety. These conditions may happen in a building, group of buildings or in a given section of a building, therefore steps should be taken at a local level to assess the situation and determine an appropriate response.

What is the maximum temperature to which people can be exposed?

In legislation, there is no single value for the maximum temperature to which a person can be exposed at work, nor is there a single value above which work should stop. This is because there are a number of factors that determine one's limits including: the relative humidity, the amount of air movement, the length of time one is exposed, the intensity of manual tasks, the type of clothing being worn, the degree of individual acclimatization, as well as each person's health status. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) recommends the use of Environment Canada's "humidex" scale, which figures in temperature as well as relative humidity and provides better guidance on dealing with thermal comfort issues than relying solely on temperature. The humidex scale is divided into 4 ranges, according to the associated effects:

- Less than 29: No discomfort
- 30 to 39: Some discomfort
- 40 to 45: Great discomfort; avoid exertion
- Above 45: Dangerous; Heat stroke possible

Humidex values can be calculated using [this table](#) provided by CCOHS. An extremely high humidex reading is defined by Environment Canada as one that is over 40. While actions may be warranted at any elevated level, humidex readings above 40 will require careful and immediate attention.

How should you report problematic conditions?

In the event that conditions become problematic please contact the Facilities Call Centre (FCC) to report the situation. See below for

