

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Safety

Safety Standard Operating Procedure Number: SSOP 11-6

Date: March 4, 2013

STATUS: FINAL

Title: Seasonal Considerations for Field Activities

Purpose:

The purpose of this Safety Standard Operating Procedure (SSOP) is to outline the seasonal considerations for conducting field activities.

Definitions:

1. **Remote Locations** – Uninhabited locations where a source of cool drinking water and utilities are not available to provide a cool, or warm area for rest periods while working under extreme weather conditions. Examples include: abandoned hazardous waste sites, closed landfills, rivers, streams, lakes, abandoned/closed facilities, and constructions sites.
2. **Extended Work in Remote Areas** – On-site work that will exceed two (2) hours in duration.
3. **Extreme Hot Weather Conditions:** Ambient temperatures that exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit. The 90 degree threshold should be used as a general guideline. Consideration should also be given to the ambient temperature, relative humidity, level of work, and the duration of work activities. Consideration should also be given to any announced heat stress indices announced by local weather forecasts.
4. **Electrolyte Replacement Solutions** – Commercially available drinks which provide electrolyte replacement. These may include concentrates which are added to drinking water, or pre-mixed solutions.
5. **Chemical Protective Clothing** – Specialized outer wear that provides protection against chemical contaminants (*i.e.* Tyvek, Saranex)
6. **Declared Emergency Road Conditions** - Road conditions announced by counties indicating hazardous driving conditions.

Requirements:

1. Hot Weather Considerations

- a. The OSHA website contains information on working in hot weather, including fact sheets and pocket guides. (<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatstress/>)

2. Cold Weather Considerations

- a. The OSHA Fact Sheet No. 98-55, Protecting Workers in Cold Environments, contains information on working in cold weather.
(http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=FACT_SHEET_S&p_id=186)
- b. The Cold Stress Quick Card (OSHA3156-1999) contains additional information on working in cold weather.
(<http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.searchResults?pSearch=cold%20stress>)

3. Scheduling of Field Activities During Declared Emergency Road Conditions

- a. Consideration must be given to any announced emergency road conditions when scheduling field activities. The current emergency road conditions should be reviewed for the county which field activities will originate, and all counties that will be traveled through to arrive at the final destination.
- b. Field activities should be curtailed or postponed based on road conditions until such time when it is safe to travel.
- c. Guidance should be requested from the employee's supervisor in making travel plans during periods of inclement weather. The supervisor should also be consulted if weather conditions deteriorate during on-going field activities.

4. Purchasing of Electrolyte Drink Solutions

- a. The Agency will provide electrolyte replacement concentrate or drinks for field staff working in remote locations during periods of extreme hot weather if the work duration will be greater than two (2) hours.
- b. The Agency will also provide this item for projects where employees will be wearing chemical protective clothing and/or respiratory protection during periods of extreme hot weather, regardless of the project duration. The Agency will also purchase this item, regardless of the weather, if the project duration exceeds four (4) hours and requires the wearing of chemical protective clothing.

- c. The anticipated need for electrolyte replacement solution should be considered during the project pre-planning stages. If deemed necessary, the items should be purchased in advance of the start of the project.
- d. The purchase of these items with a state gas credit card ("Voyager") is not permitted.
- e. Reimbursement or the purchase of these items will not be authorized on any travel expense reports.
- f. Programs that anticipate having field staff working under conditions where the use of these items is anticipated should make arrangements to have a small supply of these items available. This should include provisions for transporting drinking water and electrolyte replacement solutions.

5. Agency Purchase of Insect Repellent

- a. The Agency will provide insect repellent to staff who will be working outdoors for extended periods of time during the summer months.
- b. The need for insect repellent should be considered during all project pre-planning during the summer months.

6. Agency Purchase of Sunblock

- a. The Agency will provide sunblock (SPF 30 or greater) to staff who will be working outdoors for extended periods of time during the summer months.
- b. The need for sunblock should be considered during all project pre-planning during the summer months.

7. Agency Purchase of Cold Weather Gear

- a. The Agency will not purchase cold weather clothing for normal work activities conducted during periods of cold weather.
- b. Carhart jackets, bibs, and overalls may be purchased for employees who are required to perform extensive outdoor activities during periods of extreme cold weather. The purchase of these items should be limited to employees performing emergency response activities, site investigation, or special investigations.