

Employers Can Do More to Protect Outdoor Workers from UV Exposure, says the CDA

OTTAWA, ON – Thanks to joint efforts by the Sun Safety at Work Canada project members, employers are learning and doing more to help protect outdoor workers against the hazards of regular UV exposure.

Canadians going to office jobs do not necessarily feel that their health is harmed or endangered when they go to work. For outdoor workers, exposure to heat and solar UV radiation puts them at risk daily for heat stress, skin cancer, sunburn, skin damage, cataracts, and other eye conditions.

The Sun Safety at Work Canada project offers employers a step-by-step plan for developing a workplace sun safety program on sunsafetyatwork.ca.

“Skin cancer is largely preventable, and employers can help by making sun safety an integral component of their occupational health and safety management program to protect their workers,” says Dr. Jennifer Beecker, CDA National Chair, Sun Awareness Working Group.

Spreading and Sharing Sun Safety

Here are some things that the project members would like employers, managers, and workers to know:

- A tan is actually an indication of skin damage. No matter how dark your skin is, you are still at risk of skin cancer. Any sun exposure continues to contribute long-term skin damage.
- Working in the shade and wearing lightweight, light-coloured clothing, including a hat, is the best form of protection when out in the sun.
- Apply sunscreen generously and consider reapplication
- Sunscreens deteriorate in the heat so store it away from extreme heat.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent can be used together – apply sunscreen first, then the repellent.
- Sunscreen ingredients/chemicals are tested to make sure they are safe, however, some people can be sensitive to sunscreen, so test a small amount before use.
- Sunlight doesn't have to be direct to do damage. Light reflected off surfaces such as sand, water, concrete, and snow can also cause damage. Reflected ultraviolet light (UV) is a particular hazard for the eyes.

- Even cloudy days can cause sun damage - up to 80% of UV radiation can pass through the clouds.
- The highest exposure of the day is from 11am to 3 pm.

Visit sunsafetyatwork.ca for more information and resources to help you build your own sun safety program.

The Sun Safety at Work Canada project was funded through financial support from Health Canada through the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, as a Coalitions Linking Action & Science for Prevention (CLASP). It is a research, policy, and practice partnership between Ryerson University, Occupational Cancer Research Centre at Cancer Care Ontario, Alberta Health Services, Canadian Cancer Society Nova Scotia, Canadian Dermatology Association, CAREX Canada, Occupational Health Nurses Association of Nova Scotia, Sun Safe Nova Scotia Coalition, and WorkSafe BC.

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Sun Awareness Week

The Canadian Dermatology Association has organized the nation-wide early summer Sun Awareness Week since 1989. The aim is to educate Canadians about the dangers of too much sun and to help stop the rising incidence of skin cancer in Canada. This year's Sun Awareness Week is Monday, June 5 to Sunday, June 11, and involves a number of events and activities across Canada.

About the CDA

The Canadian Dermatology Association, founded in 1925, represents Canadian dermatologists. The association provides easy access to the largest, most reliable source of medical knowledge on dermatology. CDA exists to advance the science and art of medicine and surgery related to the care of the skin, hair and nails; provide continuing professional development for its members; support and advance patient care; provide public education on sun protection and other aspects of skin health; and promote a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. By doing so, CDA informs and empowers both medical professionals and the Canadian public.

To learn more about what the work CDA does visit <http://www.dermatology.ca> or join the conversation on <http://www.Twitter.com/CdnDermatology> or www.Facebook.com/CdnDermatology.

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