

Nayeem Hassan Khan

Heat exposure can cause a spectrum of heat-related illnesses, which can have many symptoms. Watch out for early signs of heat intolerance like weakness, disorientation, changes in skin color, or vague physical discomfort. HRI includes adverse health conditions ranging from heat rash and sunburn, to heat cramps, heat syncope (fainting), heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. If heat stroke is not treated immediately, it can lead to coma and death.

Heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the U.S. Excessive workplace heat can lead to heat stroke and even death. The southeast and southwest regions of New Mexico had experienced the highest rate of Emergency Department (ED) visits resulted from/due to heat-related illness (HRI) in 2023. In 2023, there were total 968 heat-related ED visits reported in New Mexico from April 1st to September 30th where roughly two-thirds of the visits were among males. Out of these 968 heat-related ED visits, 52 visits were also reported as work-related which means those heat-related illness (HRI) occurred during people at work.

Data source: National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP). These estimates do not include Indian Health Services or Veterans Health Administration.

I strongly believe when this "EIB 25-11 (R) - New Regulation, 11.5.7 NMAC - Heat Illness and Injury Prevention" will go into effect, this will protect New Mexico workers from exposure to high temperatures while at work and prevent them from heat-related illnesses at occupational settings.