



## Heat Stress Prevention

RMI cannot stress the importance of Heat Stress Prevention during the Spring through Summer months in Louisiana. Being in Louisiana from early May to October is unlike any other area in the country. Not only does the temperature increase, but so does the humidity. Working in the Louisiana hot environment—whether outdoors in the summer sun or indoors near heat-generating equipment—puts our bodies under strain.

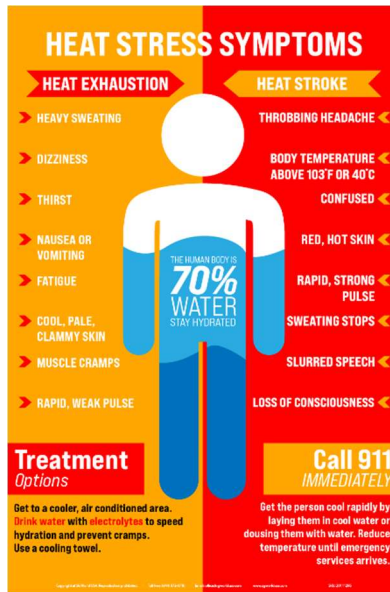
Heat stress happens when the body can't cool itself fast enough, and if it's not addressed quickly, it can progress from mild discomfort to **life-threatening** emergencies. In Louisiana, the heat index—what the temperature feels like when humidity is factored in—often reaches dangerous levels in summer and even late spring.

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### Heat Exhaustion Symptoms:

- Heavy sweating
- Painful muscle cramps
- Extreme weakness and/or fatigue
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Dizziness and/or headache
- Body temperature normal or slightly high
- Fainting
- Pulse fast and weak
- Breathing fast and shallow
- Clammy, pale, cool, and/or moist skin

*Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through excessive sweating. Heat exhaustion is most likely to affect: The elderly. People with high blood pressure*



### Heat Stroke Symptoms:

- No sweating because the body cannot release heat or cool down
- Mental confusion, delirium, convulsions, dizziness
- Hot and dry skin (e.g., red, bluish, or mottled)
- Muscles may twitch uncontrollably
- Pulse can be rapid and weak
- Throbbing headache, shallow breathing, seizures and/or fits
- Unconsciousness and coma
- Body temperature may range from 102° - 104° F or higher within 10-15 minutes

*Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature: the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down.*

### Heat Cramps Symptoms:

- Clammy Skin
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Tiredness or weakness/fatigue

*Intense physical activity in a hot location can lead to heat cramps. The cause is a combination of your rising body temperature and a loss of electrolytes through sweat.*

### Safe Practices for Louisiana Worksites

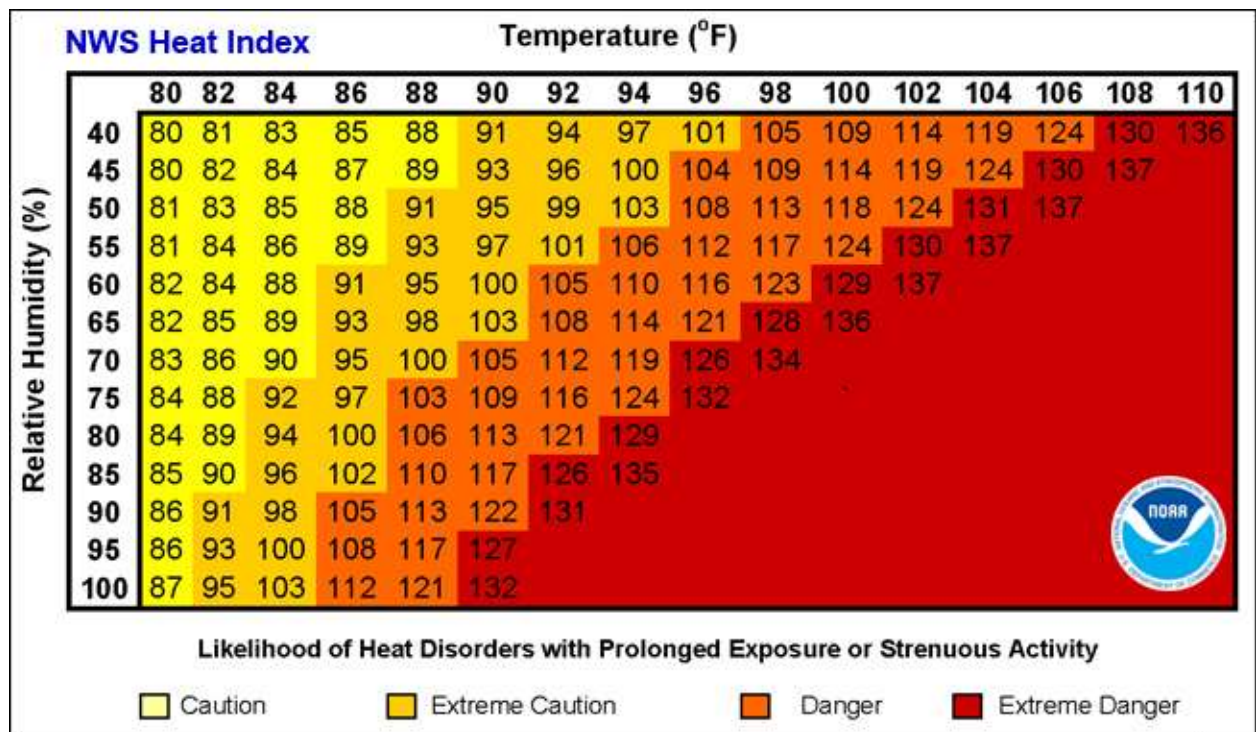
- Hydrate consistently -don't wait until you're thirsty. Drink cool water frequently.



- Provide shade and cooling - establish shaded or air-conditioned rest areas and enforce frequent breaks, especially during peak heat.
- Implement heat safety protocols - monitor for early symptoms like cramps, headache, dizziness, or confusion. If signs worsen, move the individual to a cool spot and call emergency services if needed.
- Leverage tools like the OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety App, which calculates real-time heat index levels and gives guidance tailored for outdoor workers.

### National Weather Service Heat Index Graph

While municipalities are not regulated OSHA, a lot of great resources from OSHA and other regulatory agencies. OSHA, NIOSH, CDC, and NWS are all agencies that provide guidance and resources for reference.



### Conclusion

In Louisiana's heat and humidity, heat stress isn't just a summer problem, it is a constant risk. Staying hydrated, taking shade breaks, pacing work, and watching out for one another are the simplest, most effective ways to prevent illness and save lives. When the heat index climbs, safety must come first.

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