Extreme Weather Safety Policy

Objective: To safeguard the well-being of all personnel by establishing concise guidelines for mitigating risks associated with extreme weather conditions, specifically focusing on extreme heat and cold environments.

Scope: This policy applies to all personnel engaged in fieldwork activities and is designed to address the specific safety concerns related to the potential risk of extreme weather during outdoor work.

1. Extreme Heat Daily Safety Meetings:

At the beginning of work days that have a predicted high temperature, crews must assess the weather conditions for the day and go over best practices to protect against heat related illness and review signs of symptoms of heat related illness. Establish a buddy system for the day to monitor each other and encourage taking breaks in the shade, slowing down, drinking water at regular intervals. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the health of crew members over the day.

In the event that a member of the crew is beginning to exhibit signs of heat related stress, they must be asked to stop work, be taken to the shade and given water. Someone must stay with this person to monitor their condition.

Supervisors must call another safety meeting to assess how the rest of the crew is doing and re assess the preventative measures in place and decide if work should continue.

If more than two members of a crew begin showing signs of heat related stress, operations must stop for the day and either change to work that is easier in effort and or can be done in the shade, if nothing is available then work must stop for the day.

2. Roles and Responsibilities:

2.1. Safety and HR Lead (Health and Safety Lead):

- Conducting Formal Hazard Assessment.
- Creating an Emergency Response Plan in the event of extreme weather.
- Providing necessary safety training related to effects of exposure and how to protect oneself from extreme weather.
- Providing Training to Supervisors on how to use controls.
- Running evaluation inspections to ensure workers are knowledgeable about the best safety practices and precautions.
- Supplying supervisors and workers with relevant PPE and educating on proper use.
- Insuring Daily Safety Meeting reports address extreme weather concerns appropriately if they are present.

2.2. **Supervisors**:

- Monitoring daily conditions and discussing at Morning Safety Meeting.
- Assessing through the course of the workday workers' health and reactions to extreme weather.
- Reassessing with the team if the conditions worsen.
- If the day begins with the work site exhibiting extreme weather that is unreasonable to work in for health-related reasons, then work must be stopped until conditions improve.
- Having the appropriate communication devices with them to alert to changing conditions and warn workers if necessary to implement Emergency Plans.

2.3. **All Workers:**

- Ensuring proper training to deal with extreme weather in case of exposure.
- Having the correct PPE with them and using it correctly.
- Reporting any health concerns as soon as they experience them.
- Exercising their right to refuse work if the conditions feel unsafe.
- Having the communication devices with them to stay alert to changing conditions and warnings.

3. Heat Sources:

- The environment, including radiant heat from sunlight, air temperature, and humidity.
- Physical work, which intensifies heat production in the body.
- Worker factors such as poor health, inadequate hydration, and lack of personal protective equipment.

3.1. **Mitigation Measures:**

- Stay hydrated by drinking frequently; consider electrolyte drinks or adding a pinch of salt to water.
- Slow down the pace of work.
- Take frequent breaks in cool environments like air-conditioned trucks or shaded areas.
- Wear appropriate PPE.

3.2. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Shakti Recommends:**

- Light-colored, loose-fitting clothing (men’s collared shirts).
- A wide-brimmed hat.
- Sunscreen.

4. Heat-Related Illnesses:

4.1. Dehydration:

- Characterized by extreme thirst, headaches, nausea, and confusion.
- To prevent dehydration, drink frequently before, during, and after physical exertion.
- Consume one liter of water per hour of work; consider electrolytes to aid hydration.

4.2. Heat Cramps:

- Painful muscle cramps that may lead to heat exhaustion.
- Rest in a cool place.
- Hydrate with cool water or sports drinks.

4.3. Heat Exhaustion:

- Heat exhaustion is a less severe condition compared to heat stroke. The primary goal in treating heat exhaustion is to cool the person down and rehydrate them. Here are the general steps:
  - Move the person to a cooler environment, preferably an air-conditioned space or a shaded area.
  - Encourage the individual to drink cool water or sports drinks. Avoid beverages with caffeine or alcohol.
  - Use cooling measures such as applying cold compresses, using fans, or allowing the person to rest in a cool bath.
  - Loosen or remove tight clothing to promote better heat dissipation.

4.4. Heat Stroke: Heat stroke is a medical emergency and is more severe than heat exhaustion. Immediate action is crucial. Here are the steps to follow:

- **Emergency services**: Contact emergency services (call 911 or the local emergency number) immediately. Heat stroke can be life-threatening, and professional medical assistance is required.
- **Move to a cool place**: While waiting for emergency services, move the person to a cooler environment.
- **Cooling measures**: Begin rapid cooling measures. This can include immersing the person in a cool bath, using cold compresses, or fanning them. Do whatever is feasible to lower the body temperature quickly.
- **Hydration**: If the person is conscious and able to swallow, provide cool water for them to drink.

It's crucial to recognize that heat stroke is a medical emergency, and delay in seeking professional medical help can have severe consequences. Heat stroke can lead to organ damage and even be fatal, therefore, prompt action is essential. Heat exhaustion, while less severe, should also be treated promptly to prevent it from progressing to heat

stroke. Always seek medical attention if there is any doubt about the severity of the condition.

5. **Return to Work Practices for Someone Who Has Been Affected by Heat Stress:**
   - **Medical clearance**: Before returning to work, the individual should obtain medical clearance from a healthcare professional. In the event that you are stationed in a remote location with no access to medical clearance, an online or over the phone consultation must be arranged. A thorough assessment will help determine if they are physically ready to resume regular work activities.
   - **Gradual return**: This begins with reduced work hours to allow the individual to acclimate to the work environment and prevent a recurrence of heat-related issues.
   - **Work modifications**: Temporary modifications to work environment or tasks. This could include providing shaded areas, ensuring access to cool water, or adjusting work schedules to avoid peak heat hours.
   - **Education and awareness**: We will provide education and training on heat-related illnesses, prevention strategies, and early signs of distress to the individual through our online training portal. Specific training on the health related impacts of recurring heat stress will also be included in the training. Awareness can help in preventing future occurrences.
   - **Monitoring**: Supervisors will be tasked with monitoring the individual closely during the initial return-to-work period. Encourage open communication, and ensure they feel comfortable reporting any concerns or symptoms.
   - **Hydration and breaks**: Emphasize the importance of staying hydrated and taking breaks when needed. Encourage the individual to listen to their body and take necessary precautions to avoid overheating

6. **Heat Operational Guidelines:** Shakti by TELUS employees are considered to be performing high exertion work in acclimatized states of physical fitness.

   - **Below 20 degrees celsius - work may continue as normal with no change in operations.**
   - **20 - 25 degrees celsius - work may continue as normal with emphasis in FLHA on drinking water regularly and staying hydrated. Taking 15 minute rests every 2-3 hours and seeking shade or stopping if needed.**
   - **25-28 degrees celsius - Morning check-ins to assess crews response to heat. Work may continue with mandatory 15 minute breaks every 1-2 hours. Proper PPE, regular hydration and seeking shade during rest. Fire Hours also may come into effect at this heat range.**
   - **28-33 degrees celsius - Fire Hours are in effect 6:30am - 1pm. And working longer shifts but shorter days.**

- **Above 35+ degrees celsius operations are suspended and risk assessments will be done. If the crew decides that they feel safe to continue then 6:30-12 or 1pm and longer shifts but shorter days stay mandatory.**

7. Extreme Cold:

7.1. Mitigation Measures:
- Wear appropriate PPE.
- Limit exposure by taking breaks in a warm environment.
- Monitor physical activity.

7.2. Layering System:
- Utilize a layering system with baselayer, midlayer, and outer shell to ensure warmth and dryness.

7.3. Material Recommendations:
- Wool and synthetic fibers provide insulation even when wet; avoid cotton.
- Consider nitrile-coated gloves for warmth.
- Bring a change of dry clothes.

7.4. Physical Activity:
- Moderate pace of work to prevent excessive sweating.
- Take breaks in a heated truck if it's too cold to work safely.

7.5. Cold Stress:
- Characterized by shivering, numbness, and sluggishness; may lead to frostbite and hypothermia.

7.6. **Frostbite**:
- Characterized by cold skin, prickling feeling, and inflamed or discolored skin.
- Limit exposure; wear protective clothing.
- Rewarm affected areas.

7.7. **Hypothermia**:
- Characterized by shivering, pale skin, slow pulse, confusion, and hallucinations.
- Move to a warm environment.
- Remove moist clothes.
- Rewarm with blankets and hot fluids.

In severe cases, contact emergency services immediately.

8. Return to Work Protocol for Someone Who Has Experienced Cold Related Illness:

- Medical Evaluation: Seek prompt medical attention for the affected individual. A healthcare professional will assess the severity of the cold-related illness and provide appropriate treatment.
- Medical Clearance: Obtain medical clearance before returning to work. The individual should not return to work until a healthcare professional confirms they are fit to do so.
- Gradual Return: A gradual return to work rather than an immediate full return. This may involve starting with lighter duties or reduced work hours to allow the individual to acclimate to the work environment.
- Work Modifications: Depending on the nature of the job, there will be consideration made to temporarily modify the individual's work environment or tasks to minimize exposure to cold conditions.
- Clothing and PPE: Ensure the individual has appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent a recurrence of cold-related illness. This may include insulated clothing, gloves, and head protection.
- Education and Awareness: Provide education and training on the prevention of cold-related illnesses, early signs of distress, and proper use of protective measures.
- Monitoring: Monitor the individual closely during the initial return-to-work period. Encourage open communication, and ensure they feel comfortable reporting any concerns or symptoms.
- Breaks and Warm-up Periods: Allow for breaks and warm-up periods, especially if the work involves exposure to cold conditions. Provide access to warm areas for breaks

All heat or cold related illness incidents must be reported through the incident reporting form within 12 hours of incident.

By adhering to this policy, we prioritize the health and safety of our personnel, ensuring preparedness and proactive measures for extreme weather conditions.

Review: This Policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if an incident or procedural change occurs. Oversight is provided by the Leadership Team and Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Reviewed: 2025/04/21