

# Summer is knocking on our door



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In February of this year, NALC asked USPS to provide us with its 2020 Heat Injury Prevention Program (HIPP). It took until April 9 for USPS to issue a response indicating that the course was finalized and uploaded in its integrated HR system, HERO, which makes the material available through LiteBlue.

The material did not include a deadline for completion, so I made an inquiry. As of this writing, we have not received a response. Until we receive the information we have requested, we will use last year's notice to NALC, which indicates that:

...Employees must complete this training prior to April 1 each year. Employees who are absent when the training is provided are required to

be provided with the training prior to returning to street duties, during the period April 1 through October 31...

The 2019 instructions included footnotes, which indicated that for FY 2019, the deadline was extended to April 30, 2019.

I took the 2020 course on April 11, and when I review the HERO records, it accurately reflects that date.

But when I reviewed the remainder of the courses identified as completed, I noted that there were a number of entries claiming that I had completed 30 additional training items, which is simply not true.

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**“While working in hot environments, try to make the job easier or shorten its duration by taking frequent breaks as needed.”**

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Why do I bring this to your attention? I do so because the employer, in past years, has made entries into this training and tracking system that are plainly not true. The entries are made to keep USPS headquarters off their backs in the field. If you find that false entries are being made that relate to training that you should have received, please reach out to your shop steward or branch officers. Article 14 of the National Agreement requires that the employer develop a safe working force. Making false entries about required training does not help develop a safe working force.

**With that in mind, if you have not received the training at work by the time you read this, I encourage you to do the**

following:

- See your union representative to make an inquiry as to when this training will be conducted at work and, if necessary, request that a grievance be filed.
- Sign in to LiteBlue at your first opportunity and click on the HERO icon. From there, click on “My Learning” (top left of screen). At this point, it shows what is in the active queue. Change the selection criteria to “Completed” and it will list all of the courses that you have completed.

**In the April letter from USPS, we were advised that:**

...The objective of this course is for participants to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat stress, first aid treatments of heat related illnesses, and preventive measures for minimizing heat stress.

Employees working in hot environments will be required to take this training. The training material associated with this course will be provided to you when it becomes available...

When you take the course, you have the option of downloading and printing out a “transcript of the narration.” I would strongly encourage each and every employee to take the course, and save a copy of the transcript for your future use.

The training should take between 15 and 30 minutes, and is broken down into the following three sections:

1. Identifying risk factors
2. Recognizing and treating heat-related illnesses
3. Taking preventive measures

Each section provides useful information.

In Section 1, the narrator discusses heat stroke as follows:

Narrator: You should never send a person who is suspected to have heat stroke home or leave them unattended without the approval of a physician.

In Section 3, the following instructional comment is important and should be kept at the ready to combat any inappropriate management behavior as a result of your performance in the heat:

Narrator: While working in hot environments, try to make the job easier or shorten its duration by taking frequent breaks as needed.

Narrator: Slow down the work pace and use an air conditioned area for rest breaks when possible.

The HERO system has a May 31 expected completion date. Yesterday and this morning, as I write this, I was informed of the first two heat-related injuries for the year.

Keep management honest and keep an eye on each other.