



National Association of Letter Carriers

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MEMORANDUM

From the Desk of

April 16, 2020

Manuel L. Peralta Jr.
Director of Safety & Health

To: NBAs, RAAs, all Branches

Subject: USPS 2020 Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP)

By letter dated February 25, 2020, the NALC submitted a request for information on the subject of heat safety. Specifically we asked “...Does the USPS have its 2020 training materials prepared? If so, could it be forwarded to me with the corresponding instructions?”

By letter dated April 9, 2020, (received on 4/11/2020) the USPS provided the NALC with a response to our request as follows:

“...The FY 20 Heat Stress Recognition and Prevention training course has been finalized and uploaded in our integrated HR system, HERO. This course, currently available to employees, discusses the effects of heat on a person's body, outlines the risk factors for heat-related illnesses, and describes the associated treatments for each. It also explains several control measure techniques and safe work practices that can be used to prevent heat-related stress.

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...”

Following my receipt of the above letter, I logged in to Lite Blue, searched for and took the course. It is a Slide show which is narrated. The “transcript of the narration is available” for downloading from within the program. I would strongly encourage each and every employee to take the course, and save off a copy of the transcript for your use in the future.

The training should take between 20 and 30 minutes 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: Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Request immediate professional medical treatment by calling 911, if you experience these signs or observe them on one of your co-workers.
- Narrator: You should also be familiar with the appropriate first-aid treatment for heat stroke, so you can perform it on the job.
- Narrator: First, place the victim in a shady area. Then remove the victim's outer clothing and apply cool, wet cloths or towels to the skin.
- Narrator: You should also fan the victim, and if they're conscious, give them cool water to drink.
- Narrator: If the victim refuses water, vomits, or loses consciousness, call 911 for an ambulance immediately.
- 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.** (Emphasis added)

Sadly in the past, horror stories were shared with us that demonstrated disregard for the welfare of letter carriers. In one case, where an employee notified the supervisor that the employee was unable to see out of one eye the supervisor was uncaring enough to tell the employee to drive back to the station anyway. In many situations supervisors have guided heat injured employees to the time clock and watched them drive away to later find that they had suffered serious heat injuries including heat stroke.

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.
- Narrator: Drink water regularly even if you aren't thirsty. Narrator: Depending on the conditions, you may need to drink a quart of water every hour or more.
- Narrator: Never work alone and use a buddy system, including use of a personal cell phone to connect with other city and rural carriers, supervisors, and managers.
- Narrator: You and your co-workers should monitor each other for signs of heat stress and know what to do in case anyone shows any symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

Please take the time to pass this document on to each of your Shop Stewards and Safety Captains at each of your work locations. Management must conduct the training and our membership needs to pay close attention to the steps they need to take to protect themselves from serious harm. If your managers are not conducting the training during the time frame identified in the HERO training system, contact your shop stewards and branch officers for assistance. The HERO system has a May 31, 2020 expected completion date, however, it heats up well before that deadline and the course should be taken by all of you before your heat waves begin,

As always, I thank you all for your attention to this memo and ask that you pass this on to your representatives on the front line.