

June 5-8, 2019

**Crane Rental  
Association of Canada  
Conference**Delta Prince Edward  
Charlottetown, PE  
www.crac-aclg.ca

June 26-27, 2019

**International Tower  
Crane (ITC) Conference**Vienna, Austria  
www.khl.com-itc

September 18-20, 2019

**SC&RA Crane and  
Rigging Workshop**Glendale, AZ  
www.scranet.org

October 1-3, 2019

**ICUEE DEMO EXPO**Louisville, KY  
www.icuee.com

October 8-10, 2019

**Breakbulk Americas**Houston, TX  
www.breakbulk.com

October 16, 2019

**Lift & Move USA**BOSS Crane & Rigging,  
Bennett International  
Longview, TX  
www.liftandmoveusa.com

October 27-29, 2019

**AWRF Fall  
General Meeting**San Diego, CA  
www.awrf.org

November 7, 2019

**Lift & Move USA**Liebherr  
Houston, TX  
www.liftandmoveusa.com

November 13-14, 2019

**World Crane &  
Transport Summit**Amsterdam, Netherlands  
www.khl-wcts.com

November 19-21, 2019

**Power-Gen**New Orleans, LA  
www.power-gen.com

January 8-11, 2020

**SC&RA Board &  
Committee Meeting**Cabo, Mexico  
www.scranet.org

# Beat the heat

Now is the time to revisit your heat illness prevention program.

In the crane and rigging industry, the annual transition to warmer temperatures means an uptick in projects and workable hours on jobsites. It's a busy time of year – productivity is going up, and temperatures are too. Of all weather-related fatalities in the United States, perhaps surprisingly, heat is both the dominant cause of death and chief among the most preventable.

The first step to ensuring that your workers are not put at increased risk for experiencing heat-related stress and illnesses is the creation and maintenance of a robust *Heat Illness Prevention Program*. If your company doesn't already have this type of program, you need to start developing one right now – it's as simple as that.

## Educate your workers

One of the easiest ways to prevent heat-related illness and injury is to have an educated workforce. Share the potential threats – heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, heat rash – and how to protect against them with your employees regularly throughout the warmer months.

And be aware that understanding what symptoms to look for, and what to do when they are spotted, can be the difference between life and death. The acronym HEAT stands for Hydrate, Educate, Acclimatize and Train. Using this simple mnemonic can help you and your workers remember the key points in preventing heat injury and illness on your company's jobsites.

■ **HYDRATE** – Provide access to cool water and schedule frequent water breaks so that workers can get the water they need when working in high-heat environments. At least one pint of water is needed per hour.

■ **EDUCATE** – Make sure all your workers know to look for the signs of heat injury and illness, the difference in symptoms between

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the different types of heat illness, and what to do to help coworkers who appear to be suffering from a heat-related illness.

■ **ACCLIMATIZE** – Reduce risk of heat injury by allowing your workers time to build up a tolerance and acclimatize to working in high heat, whether its because they have been performing other jobs or if temperatures have risen rapidly in a given season.

■ **TRAIN** – Train workers with good habits and rules for working in high heat, taking regular breaks for water and rest in cooler or shaded areas, always wearing the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and attempting to rotate job functions with other employees to reduce heat exposure where possible.

## Preventing consequences

Employees (at some point, most crane and rigging workers in the United States) who perform work in moderate to high temperatures and/or humid weather conditions, especially where increased heart rate and perspiration are concerned, must know the necessary information to recognize, understand and try to prevent the consequences of heat stress. Understanding what to look for and what to do can mean the difference between life and death.

There's simply no substitute for a well-communicated, often revisited *Heat Illness Prevention Program*. In some states, these plans/programs are actually required by law. Heat illness training is a crucial part of a company's safety and risk management program. Don't let summer arrive before you are ready to protect your workers against it. ■

## THE AUTHOR



**Bill Smith** executive vice president, NBIS, is an expert on risk management and safe crane operations. He was a member of C-DAC, which assisted writing the OSHA Crane & Derricks Standard.

