

TOWN OF CLINTON

Heat Index and Air Quality Index Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect employees and summer camp attendees from heat-related illnesses and exposure to unhealthy air quality while performing outdoor work. The Town is committed to providing a safe workplace and reducing the risk of injury or illness caused by extreme heat or poor air quality.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, seasonal employees, and volunteers performing outdoor work. This policy applies to all summer camp attendees

3. Town Supervisor, Highway Superintendent, and Recreation Director Responsibilities

The Town Supervisor, Highway Superintendent, and Recreation Director, or their designee, shall:

- Monitor daily weather forecasts, Heat Index, and Air Quality Index (AQI).
- Adjust work schedules when practical to perform strenuous work during cooler morning hours.
- Ensure drinking water is readily available.
- Provide shaded or air-conditioned rest areas.
- Ensure employees receive annual training on heat illness and air quality hazards.
- Monitor new employees or employees returning from extended leave as they acclimate to hot working conditions.
- Suspend or modify work when environmental conditions create an unreasonable risk.

4. Employee Responsibilities

Employees shall:

- Drink water frequently, even if not thirsty.
- Wear appropriate clothing, hats, and sunscreen.
- Report symptoms of heat illness immediately.
- Notify supervisors if they observe a coworker exhibiting signs of heat stress.
- Take authorized cooling or recovery breaks.
- Properly wear any respiratory protection provided when required.

5. Heat Stress Procedures

The Town shall use the U.S. National Weather Service Heat Index.

Heat Index Below 80°F

- Normal work activities.
- Encourage hydration.

Heat Index 80°F–89°F

- Increase water intake.
- Encourage breaks every 60 minutes.
- Monitor employees for early signs of heat stress.
- Closely monitor employees not yet acclimated to hot weather.

Heat Index 90°F–99°F

- Schedule heavy labor before noon whenever practical.
- Mandatory cooling breaks of at least 15 minutes every two hours.
- Use a buddy system.
- Increase supervisor monitoring.

Heat Index 100°F and Above

- Reschedule non-essential heavy work whenever practical.
- Increase break frequency.
- Rotate employees performing strenuous tasks.
- Use mechanical equipment whenever possible to reduce physical exertion.
- The Highway Superintendent may suspend outdoor operations if conditions become unsafe.

These practices are consistent with OSHA recommendations emphasizing water, rest, shade, acclimatization, and work modification during hazardous heat exposure.

6. Air Quality (AQI) Procedures

The Town shall use the U.S. EPA Air Quality Index.

AQI 0–100 (Good/Moderate)

- Normal operations.

AQI 101–150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups)

- Employees with asthma, COPD, heart disease, or other respiratory conditions should limit strenuous outdoor activity.
- Increase rest breaks as needed.

AQI 151–200 (Unhealthy)

- Reduce strenuous outdoor work.
- Reschedule non-essential projects where practical.
- Consider use of properly fitted N95 respirators for voluntary use where appropriate.

AQI 201–300 (Very Unhealthy)

- Only essential outdoor work should be performed.
- Limit exposure duration.
- Frequent breaks in clean indoor air.
- Consider postponing non-emergency operations.

AQI Above 300 (Hazardous)

- Suspend all non-emergency outdoor work.
- Emergency response work shall be authorized only by the Highway Superintendent using appropriate protective measures.

7. Heat Illness Symptoms

Employees shall immediately report:

- Heavy sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Nausea
- Headache
- Confusion
- Fainting

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. If an employee exhibits confusion, loss of consciousness, seizures, or stops sweating despite high body temperature:

- Call 911 immediately.
- Move the employee to shade.
- Remove excess clothing.
- Cool the employee with water, ice packs, or fans while awaiting EMS.

8. Hydration

Employees performing outdoor work should have access to potable drinking water throughout the workday and should drink water frequently. Supervisors shall encourage hydration before, during, and after work.

9. Summer Camp Activities

The Town is committed to providing a safe environment for all participants and staff during periods of extreme heat or poor air quality. Camp directors and staff shall monitor daily weather forecasts, the Heat Index, and the Air Quality Index (AQI), and modify activities as necessary to protect the health and safety of campers.

Heat

During periods of elevated heat:

- Campers and staff shall have continuous access to potable drinking water and be encouraged to hydrate frequently.
- Frequent rest breaks shall be provided in shaded or air-conditioned areas.
- Sunscreen use and appropriate clothing, including hats when practical, shall be encouraged.
- Strenuous outdoor activities shall be scheduled during the cooler morning hours whenever possible.
- Outdoor activities may be shortened, modified, or relocated indoors based on the Heat Index.
- Staff shall monitor campers for signs of heat-related illness, including excessive fatigue, dizziness, headache, nausea, confusion, muscle cramps, or unusual behavior.
- Any camper or staff member exhibiting symptoms of heat illness shall be moved to a cool location, provided appropriate first aid, and evaluated for further medical attention. Emergency medical services shall be contacted immediately if heat stroke is suspected.

Air Quality

Camp staff shall use the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Air Quality Index (AQI) to guide outdoor activities.

- **AQI 0–100 (Good/Moderate):** Normal activities.
- **AQI 101–150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups):** Reduce strenuous outdoor activities for campers with asthma or other respiratory conditions and monitor all participants for symptoms.
- **AQI 151–200 (Unhealthy):** Limit strenuous outdoor activities, shorten outdoor time, and move activities indoors when practical.
- **AQI 201–300 (Very Unhealthy):** Suspend outdoor recreation except when necessary for brief transitions; conduct activities indoors whenever possible.
- **AQI Above 300 (Hazardous):** Cancel all outdoor activities until air quality improves.

Parents and guardians should notify camp staff of any medical conditions, including asthma or other respiratory illnesses, that may require special accommodations during periods of extreme heat or poor air quality. Staff shall have access to emergency contact information and follow established emergency response procedures for any camper requiring medical attention.

This section aligns with guidance from the EPA and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

10. Policy Authority

The Town Supervisor, Highway Superintendent, or Recreation Director may temporarily modify work schedules, postpone projects, authorize early start times, or suspend outdoor work whenever environmental conditions present an unreasonable risk to employee health and safety. The Highway Superintendent and Recreation Director must consult with the Town Supervisor before any modifications.

This policy is designed to be practical for a municipality while aligning with OSHA's current guidance under the General Duty Clause. It also provides flexibility for the Town Supervisor to respond to changing weather and wildfire smoke events without imposing rigid requirements that may not fit every situation.