



# WisCon Words of Wisdom

Volume 4 | Issue 7 | July 1, 2024

## Emergency Response Comment Period Extended

The comment period for the [proposed rule](#) to expand protections for emergency responders has been extended to July 22, 2024. Comments may be submitted electronically at [regulations.gov](#) and must include the agency's name and docket number (OSHA-2007-0073.)

## July Awareness Topics

All Month Long:

[Vehicle Theft Prevention](#)

## Upcoming Webinars

August 27th: [Confined Space Hazard Awareness](#)

October 29th: [Work-related Asthma](#)

December 17th: [Walking/Working Surfaces—Slips, Trips, and Falls](#)

## We want to hear from you!

What content would you like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Let us know [here](#).

## Get Prepared Now For Safe + Sound Week

[Safe + Sound Week](#) is an annual event in August organized by OSHA to promote and recognize workplace safety and health programs. Join hundreds of other businesses, supporters, and partners by showing your commitment to keeping your workers and yourself safe. Last year, Safe + Sound Week reached over **416,000** workers (enough to fill over 5 Lambeau Fields) at 3,911 different businesses country wide. This year, we are hoping to reach even more employers and employees, starting with you!

During this year's Safe + Sound Week, OSHA will be providing resources for businesses on job hazard analyses and other topics. Still wondering why you should join? Whether you are looking to launch a new safety initiative, elevate your existing program or celebrate your safety achievements, participating in Safe + Sound Week offers the perfect opportunity to engage your team and strengthen your commitment to a safer workplace. By getting involved, you not only contribute to a culture of safety at your workplace, but can inspire your team to get involved themselves! Join us and be a part of this national effort to enhance workplace safety and health!

## Prioritizing the Safety and Health of Outdoor Workers

It is important for employers to consider the impacts of extreme weather on the safety and health of outdoor workers. Increasing average temperatures and changing weather patterns are just as much a threat to construction workers as to response and recovery workers. The risk of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities among outdoor workers is higher when exposed to [heat](#) and other hazards, including those present during response to weather events such as [hurricanes](#), [wildfires](#), [tornadoes](#), and [floods](#). The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) assists employers and workers with training and resources before exposures to environmental stresses occur.

### Heat

OSHA is working daily to protect the U.S. workforce as they face heat while on the job.

Each year, [thousands of workers become sick](#) due to occupational heat exposure, and some die. New employees who have not had the chance to adjust to working in the heat are the most vulnerable. [Three out of four heat-related](#) workplace fatalities occur in the first week on the job. (Continued on Page 2)

## Prioritizing the Safety and Health of Outdoor Workers (continued)

The agency's [Heat Illness Prevention Campaign](#) provides heat hazard resources to keep workers safe, including information for [employers](#), [workers](#), and [more](#). Help is available to employers who need to create a heat illness prevention plan, train workers, and provide first aid for heat illness. Workers gain insights on workplace rights, heat illness prevention and heat illness signs and symptoms. Many of the resources are available in multiple languages.

The OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool [App](#) is a tool for everyone! It allows workers and supervisors to calculate the heat index for their worksite and—based on the heat index—displays a risk level to outdoor workers. OSHA has a newsletter that highlights heat-specific information and new resources ([sign-up](#)).

OSHA published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) for Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings (see [Federal Register](#)) in October 2021, and completed additional steps in the rulemaking process more recently, including gaining input from small entity representatives, and [briefing the Advisory Committee for Construction Safety and Health](#). Learn more on the [webpage](#).

The agency continues to conduct heat-related inspections under its [National Emphasis Program – Outdoor and Indoor Heat-Related Hazards](#), launched in 2022. The program targets workplaces with the highest exposures to heat-related hazards. Since the launch, OSHA has conducted nearly 5,000 federal heat-related inspections, in addition to offering compliance assistance and outreach.

### Natural Disaster and Weather/ Emergency Preparedness

Emergencies can create a variety of hazards for workers in the impacted area. Early preparation and drills before an emergency play a vital role in ensuring that employers and workers have the necessary equipment, know where to go, and know how to keep themselves safe when an emergency occurs. The safety of response and recovery workers who have been called to assist during a natural disaster is also important. OSHA's [Emergency Preparedness and Response page](#) provides information and resources for employers and workers on how to prepare for and respond to natural disaster and weather-related emergencies, including hurricanes and unseasonably heavy rainfall that can cause widespread flooding and damage to property.

### Hurricanes

Annually, June 1<sup>st</sup> marks the beginning of the Atlantic hurricane season. OSHA's [Hurricane Preparedness and Response](#) webpage provides information on everything related to hurricanes including warnings, hazards, and precautions that workplaces should take after a hurricane.

The [Response/Recovery](#) webpage features a link to OSHA's [Hurricane eMatrix](#). The eMatrix outlines the activities most performed during hurricane response and recovery work and provides detailed information about the hazards and recommendations for personal protective equipment, safe work practices, and precautions for each activity.

### Floods

Floods can be caused by a variety of factors, including a sudden accumula-

tion of rain, rising rivers, tidal surges, and dam failures, all of which may also be associated with hurricanes. OSHA's [Flood Preparedness and Response page](#) is designed to help employers and workers prepare for [floods](#) and any hazards that workers may face during and after a flood event.

The [Preparedness](#) page provides information on flood watches and warning, creating an evacuation plan, and making emergency supply kits. This planning information can help ensure that everyone is ready to evacuate in an orderly manner before rising waters impact a business, residence, or evacuation routes.

The [Response/Recovery](#) page provides useful details on the hazards to avoid when flooding has occurred. This includes areas to avoid when using a vehicle, and safety and health hazards such as downed electrical lines, mold, and wild animals.

Also see the [OSHA Resources](#) page, which provides access to QuickCards™ and Fact Sheets that provide additional details regarding the hazards that may be present during and after a flood.

### Employer Responsibilities and Worker Rights

Employers are responsible for providing a workplace that is free of recognized hazards, including anticipated hazards associated with extreme weather events such as excessive heat, hurricanes, and flooding. Workers have the right to speak up about hazards without fear of retaliation.

If you are a worker or employer who needs assistance, contact your local [OSHA Area Office](#), [State Plan](#), or [consultation program](#) or visit [www.osha.gov](#).