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Subject:
Working in Hot Environments

1. Introduction:

The environmental health and safety standard operating procedure for working in hot environments was developed by the Department of Environmental Health & Safety in Policy Statement on Health and Safety and to ensure compliance with the Ontario Occupational Health & Safety Act and Regulations. This document is a general guide to working in hot environments. **Due to the decentralized nature of the University, this document must be developed by individual departments or faculties based on their specific needs and work environments.**

2. Definitions:

Acclimatization

Acclimatization refers to the physiological changes taking place after prolonged exposure to heat, which partly involves increased sweat production. Core body temperature can be controlled within acceptable limits and the body then becomes accustomed to a hot environment. Acclimatization takes place over several days, with the greatest benefit occurring during the first four to five days. However, acclimatization is reversible following cessation of exposure.

Convection

Convection is the process of heat exchange between the body and the surrounding air as a result of air moving over the skin.

Core body temperature

The core body temperature is generally considered to be the temperature of the vital organs. These organs are maintained within a narrow range of temperatures by thermoregulatory mechanisms.

Dehydration

Dehydration is the loss or deficiency of water in body tissues, which may be caused by perspiration, vomiting or diarrhea. Symptoms include excessive thirst, nausea and exhaustion.

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