

## Tailored Sun Safety Messages for Construction Workers

This set of tailored, evidence-based sun safety messages were developed for outdoor construction workers, who are at high risk of occupational exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR). This document should be used as a guide for developing knowledge products for outdoor construction workers and their employers that communicate the risk of exposure to solar UVR and how to reduce exposure at work.

*Use of these messages must be appropriately credited to CAREX Canada.*

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### **Funding source**

WorkSafe BC Applied Innovation

### **Principal Investigator**

Dr. Cheryl Peters

### **Co-Applicants**

Nicole Braun, Dr. Thomas Tenkate, Dr. Linn Holness, Dr. Sunil Kalia, Ela Rydz, and Lindsay Forsman-Phillips

### **Project Coordinator**

Raissa Shrestha

### **Knowledge Translation Specialist**

Joanne Telfer

### **Key Partners**

BC Building Trades, BC Cancer, BC Centre for Disease Control, BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA), BC Federation of Labour, Canada Union Public Employees (CUPE), Sun Safety at Work Canada (SSAWC), Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, Toronto Metropolitan University, St. Michael's Hospital, WorkSafeBC, and WCB Saskatchewan

### **Contact**

info@carexcanada.ca

Sun Safety Facts
Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure from the sun causes sunburns, cataracts, skin cancer, and other forms of eye and skin damage.
Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Canada and is preventable.
Construction workers who spend time outdoors are 2.5 – 3.5 times more likely to develop skin cancer than indoor workers, and experience other harmful effects from the sun.
<p>The sun's rays are harmful all year round, especially from 11am to 3pm between April to September in Canada.</p> <p>Even when it's cloudy, ultraviolet radiation (UVR) can be harmful.</p>
Construction workers are at risk of heat illness, including heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and heat stroke. Heat illnesses are serious and can even be fatal.
Recommended Actions: Skin
<p>In Canada, from April to September, the UV Index is usually above 3 from 11am to 3pm, even if it's cloudy.</p> <p>The UV Index can be found in most weather forecasts. When the UV Index is 3 or higher, protect your skin as much as possible.</p>
Seek shade when you can. Make use of any tents, tarps, umbrellas, or canopies that are available. Take breaks in the shade.
Wear light-weight clothing that fully covers the arms and legs when you can. Your clothing is an important part of personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect you from the sun.
Use hats that provide shade to the face, ears, and neck. A brim or neck flap can be attached to hats or hardhats for additional protection.
Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Apply sunscreen generously and re-apply frequently.
Use a lip balm with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15.

<b>Recommended Actions: Protect Your Eyes</b>	
Wear safety glasses, sunglasses, or prescription eyeglasses with UV-protective lenses.	
Wear a wide-brimmed hat or attach a brim to your hardhat for added eye protection at work.	
<b>Recommended Actions: Prevent Heat Illness</b>	
Try to do outdoor and physically demanding work during the coolest parts of the workday if you can.	
Make sure to stay hydrated with fresh, cool water, especially on hot days.	
Know the signs of heat illness. These include headache, weakness, dizziness, confusion, and elevated body temperature.	
<b>Tips: Shade</b>	
Where possible, work in natural, dense shade or use a shade structure like a tent, canopy, or umbrella. The most effective shade structure, whether natural or built, offers shade from the side, not just overhead, to protect against ultraviolet radiation (UVR) that is reflected and scattered off concrete, water, sand, snow, and light-coloured surfaces.	
Cloth shade structures (like tarps, canopies, or umbrellas) should have tightly woven fabric. If sunlight passes through the fabric, it provides less protection.	
Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) (clothing, glasses with UV-protective lenses, and sunscreen) is recommended even when in the shade to protect against reflected and scattered ultraviolet radiation (UVR).	
<b>Tips: Clothing</b>	
Hats should have a wide brim or neck flap to shade the head, face, ears, and back of the neck.	
Light-weight, tightly-woven, or UV-protective clothing (labelled as UPF) is recommended. Wear long sleeves and pants if you can.	

<b>Tips: Sunscreen</b>
<p>Sunscreen should be used on all exposed skin including ears, neck, and lips.</p>
<p>Use any type of sunscreen (sprays, lotions, gels, or creams) with a sun protection factor (SPF) 30 or higher, that you find easiest to use. Apply it generously and frequently.</p>
<p>Store sunscreen in a cool and accessible place such as a site office instead of hot areas such as inside a vehicle. Do not use expired sunscreen.</p>
<b>Tips: Eye Protection</b>
<p>Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) that is harmful to the eyes is present in the sun's rays all year round and throughout the workday.</p>
<p>Eye protection is required, especially around highly reflective surfaces, such as buildings, snow, sand, and water.</p>
<p>Wear close-fitting, wraparound, UV-protective sunglasses or safety glasses at all times when outdoors for the best ultraviolet radiation (UVR) eye protection.</p>
<p>Look for safety glasses, sunglasses, or prescription lenses with full UV protection (UVA and UVB). Examples of appropriate labels are "UV400" or "100% UV protection."</p>