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How the Biden administration is battling extreme heat

The White House announced last year that it would direct multiple federal agencies to assess and prevent heat-related illnesses, injuries, and deaths. Extreme heat dangers, which can cause several adverse health effects, can be mitigated by increasing rest, hydration and providing access to cooler indoor environments.

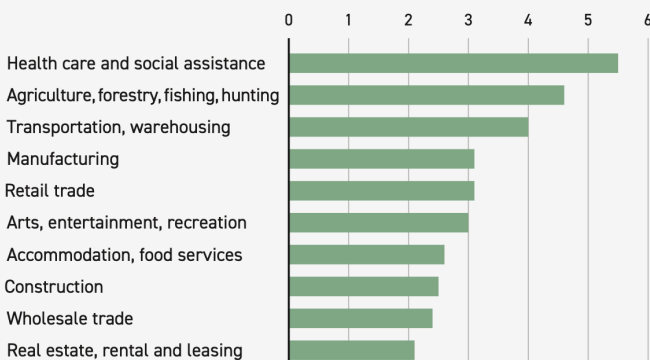


Industries that require strenuous outdoor work, such as agriculture and construction, have a high risk of heat-related illness and death.

OSHA implemented a program to protect workers from heat-related hazards and target high-risk industries with both indoor and outdoor worksites. The agency will also encourage employers to provide workers with sufficient water, shade, rest and training.

10 industries with most heat-related illness and injury

RATE OF INJURY AND ILLNESS PER 100 WORKERS

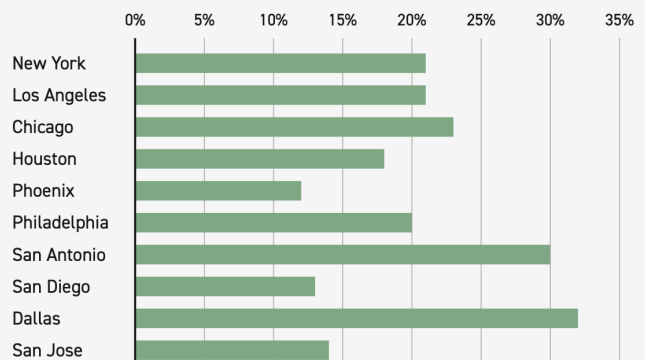


Neighborhoods without adequate tree cover, especially in urban areas, are vulnerable to heat exposure and high temperatures.

The U.S. Forest Service issued a guide for local governments on using trees and greenery to reduce extreme heat hazards. Increasing tree cover can mitigate the urban heat island effect, where materials in buildings and roads absorb and retain heat more than natural land cover.

Tree cover in 10 most populated U.S. cities

PERCENTAGE OF TREE CANOPY COVER



Low-income households are disproportionately affected by high energy costs, increasing the health risks of extreme heat at home.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides direct assistance to help households cover cooling costs. HHS allowed additional flexibility for LIHEAP funds, including increasing payments for electric bills and providing free air conditioning units to low-income families.



Exposure to extreme heat is the top weather-related cause of death in the U.S., according to the CDC. People over 65 are most vulnerable.

DHS and FEMA launched a prize competition – the Cooling Solutions Challenge – to find innovative technology that offers eco-friendly and cost-effective ways to reduce extreme heat risks. The challenge emphasizes finding solutions for at-risk populations, like infants and people experiencing homelessness.



Workers in high-risk industries, including indoor workers without climate-controlled worksites, are vulnerable to heat hazards during heat waves.

OSHA officials plan to prioritize workplace inspections on days when the heat index exceeds 80 F. OSHA directors will increase both planned and unplanned inspections, in addition to expanding campaigns to educate workers and employers on heat illness prevention.

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CDC, U.S. Census Bureau, Chicago Region Trees Initiative, City of Phoenix, City of San Diego, City of San Jose, City of Dallas, City of San Antonio, DHS, U.S. Forest Service, HHS, OSHA, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, Rice University, USDA, The White House