



## **FACT SHEET | HEAT STRESS**

### **WHAT IS HEAT STRESS?**

Heat stress occurs when the human body is unable to cool itself fast enough to maintain an internal safe temperature of around 37°C. When core temperature rises above this level, the body is put under strain, which leads to heat-related illnesses.

These include heat rash, heat cramps, dizziness or fainting, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke. Heat stroke can even lead to death in severe cases.

### **MANAGING EXPOSURE**

Every employer is legally required to eliminate or minimise risks to workers' health and safety, including hazards such as heat stress.

Yet, despite Queensland workers facing extreme heat every summer and several workers dying, the LNP just removed the only enforceable safe work practices for managing heat stress in the construction industry.

The safety rules the LNP just removed required employers to implement practical measures, such as rescheduling work to cooler parts of the day, providing shade, increasing rest breaks, or supplying extra water. Without these enforceable protections, there are now no industry rules to safeguard workers from exposure to extreme heat.

The only way to manage heat stress is to have strong industry standards and enforceable rules wherever it is a known hazard: for construction, manufacturing, outdoor work, and for workplaces like laundries and kitchens.

That's why unions are calling on the LNP to introduce new work health and safety (WHS) regulations and the Queensland Codes of Practice to protect all workers exposed to extreme heat in their day-to-day jobs.