

PLAYING IT

# SAFE

Be safe and healthy on the job at with these helpful tips provided by Downey & Company.

## Keeping Hydrated in the Heat

*Helpful tips for reducing your risk of dehydration*

In the simplest terms, dehydration occurs when you lose more water than you take in. Staying hydrated is important to keep all your body functions running smoothly. Since you work outdoors and exert yourself physically, you'll want to take extra precautions as summer heats up.

### Water Loss

On average, adults lose almost 10 cups of water a day simply by doing everyday tasks such as sweating, breathing and going to the bathroom. Electrolytes are also lost. These minerals, which include sodium, potassium and calcium, maintain the balance of fluids in the body. When you are doing physical work, you lose even more fluids and electrolytes.

### Symptoms

How do you know if you're dehydrated? You'll begin to experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- Excessive thirst
- Sleepiness or tiredness
- Dry mouth
- Muscle weakness
- Headache
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

### Preventing Dehydration

The best defense against dehydration is prevention. That sounds easy enough—consume lots of fluids and foods high in water such as fruits and vegetables—but the question as to how much fluid can be complex.

Unfortunately, determining appropriate water intake isn't an exact science, especially because so much depends on age, physical condition, activity level, location and body chemistry. The best overall approach is to make a conscious effort to stay hydrated. In hot weather, skip coffee or soda, and make water your beverage of choice.

### Pace Yourself

Exertion is part of the construction life, but you've got to take care of yourself. Take frequent water breaks. Adjust your intake to match your activity level and working conditions to stay healthy and alert. If you begin to feel symptoms of dehydration, don't ignore them.



### Come Prepared!

Electrolyte-containing sports beverages are perfect for preventing dehydration, but can be expensive. To create an economic version at home, simply add a teaspoon of salt with 8 teaspoons of sugar to a quart of water.

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