



**Matt Kean**

Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**EMBARGOED** 5AM Thursday, December 14 2017

### **STAY SAFE IN THE HEAT – TOP TIPS FOR WORKERS AND BOSSES**

Workers are being reminded to take care as summer temperatures are predicted to soar across Sydney today, Minister for Better Regulation Matt Kean said.

Mr Kean said temperatures are tipped to reach 36 degrees in Sydney, and businesses need to have systems in place to protect workers from the risk of heat-related illness and exposure to ultra violet (UV) radiation.

Over the four years to July 2016, there were 504 workers compensation claims, costing more than \$7 million, in NSW for heat stroke, fatigue and skin cancer.

“Working in extreme heat shouldn’t be taken lightly, as it can reduce concentration and the ability to recognise risks, and this can result in serious injury or even death,” Mr Kean said.

“Most at risk are outdoor workers, but also workers in confined areas such as roof spaces and those in poorly ventilated indoor workplaces. Businesses should monitor the temperature and humidity, as well as workers’ hydration to minimise their exposure to heat-related illness and UV radiation.

“Supervisors should also set realistic workloads and, where possible, schedule work to cooler times of the day. Outdoor workers should have access to air-conditioned site sheds or shaded rest areas.”

Other safety tips for working in the heat include:

- Drink water - at least 200mL every 15-20 minutes.
- Don’t drink energy or caffeinated drinks as they can have a diuretic effect.
- Provide frequent rest breaks and rotating tasks to lessen exposure to the heat and/or sun, as well as mental and physical fatigue.
- Provide outdoor workers with sun protection even when working in the shade.
- Provide clothing with UPF 50+, including loose shirts, long sleeves & collars, long pants.
- Provide broad spectrum sunscreen (at least SPF 30+), broad-brimmed hats and wrap-around sunglasses that meet Australian Standards for UV protection.

Free guidance material on fatigue management and working safely in the sun is available at [www.safework.nsw.gov.au](http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au) or by calling 13 10 50.