

ON THE LEVEL

BALANCING INDUSTRY & ASSOCIATION NEWS

On The Level - August 2017

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Solar Eclipse Safety Tips

Millions of people in the United States will be able to directly view the solar eclipse on August 21. A partial eclipse will be visible in every state and a total solar eclipse (when the Moon completely covers the Sun) will occur across 14 states in the continental U.S., along a 70-mile-wide part of the country. However, this fantastic phenomenon comes with a few safety precautions.

- Do not stare directly at the eclipse with your naked eyes. You can risk damaging your vision, but with special-purpose solar filtered glasses or a handheld solar viewer, you can safely look directly at the sun. Suitable eclipse glasses and handheld solar viewers should have certification information with a designated ISO 12312-2 international standard. Many libraries are distributing safety-certified glasses, a list of participating libraries can be found [here](#).
- Many Americans live within driving distance to the path of the eclipse. If you plan to drive along the eclipse path, check out these [tips from the U.S. Department of Transportation](#). There are also numerous festivals and events to celebrate the eclipse, so be sure to plan accordingly for traveling. Also, keep yourself and others safe on the road by avoiding distracted driving.

To find out the best times to view the eclipse in your state, check out [these maps](#).

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The Effects of Climate Change on Workers

Outdoor workers, healthcare professionals, manufacturing workers and a wide variety of other types of professions can feel the effects of climate change on their safety and health on the job. Climate conditions can magnify health and safety issues as well as lead to new hazards. Examples of climate-related occupational hazards can include:

- **High temperatures**
 - Workers exposed to extreme heat or engaged in strenuous activity may be at risk for heat stress, which can lead to heat stroke, heat exhaustion, rhabdomyolysis or even death. Higher outdoor temperatures also increase the need for climate-controlled buildings, which can lead to poor indoor air quality and other illnesses.
- **Air pollution**
 - Depending on worksite locations and weather conditions, air pollutants such as ground level ozone and particle pollution can affect respiratory health - causing heart disease, respiratory diseases and allergic disorders.
- **Extreme weather and natural disasters**
 - Floods, landslides, storms, lightning, droughts and wildfires can lead to occupational deaths, injuries and stress. Workers involved in rescue, cleanup and restoration are often exposed to hazardous conditions.
- **Biological hazards**
 - Temperature and rainfall affect the prevalence and distribution of allergens and pathogens. Outdoor workers, construction workers, healthcare professionals and emergency responders are particularly vulnerable to biological hazards. Triggering allergies, skin and lung irritation from plants and disease being spread by insects are a few of the most common issues workers face.

Climate change affects sea levels, weather patterns, animal habitats and more, but we rarely consider how it can affect and multiply the hazards workers are exposed to daily. Taking the steps to prevent illness and stay safe while on the job - like wearing proper PPE, taking breaks, reporting injuries and other crucial tasks - are more important than ever.

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Write for a VPPPA Publication

The VPPPA Blog

We are always looking for fresh content for the VPPPA [blog!](#) Articles can focus on any aspect of safety and health (PPE, leadership, training, safety programs, etc.) and we update every other Thursday.

The Leader Magazine

The next magazine issue will focus on "animals in safety/health" (i.e. animals that can detect for weapons, illegal drugs, allergens, diseases; support animals; outdoor workers and their safety when they come into contact with animals; as well as other roles animals play in safety and health).

If you are interested in contributing to a VPPPA publication, or know of someone who is, please email communications@vpppa.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

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Join Us In New Orleans

Interested in joining us for Safety+? You can still [register here](#). Taking place in New Orleans, LA, and in conjunction with the Louisiana Governor's Safety & Health Conference,

this event should not be missed. You can earn CEUs, attend workshops and hear from inspirational speakers at the premier safety and health event of the year. A brand new event this year will be **zumba class** with Kelli Heflin! Get up and get moving on **Thursday, August 31, from 7:00 - 7:45AM, in the room Galerie 5-6 in the Marriott.**

Safety+ Mobile App

We have a mobile app! To find the Safety+ app in the Google Play or iTunes stores simply search for "vpppa." Be sure to register with an email address that you can access on your mobile phone.

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VPPPA, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, promotes advances in worker safety and health excellence through best practices and cooperative efforts among workers, employers, the government and communities.

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