

# Excessive Heat



## Overview

There are a range of matters that principals need to consider to manage the risks associated with days of excessive heat at school. This guideline has been developed to ensure that heat related hazards are identified and controlled.

## Strategies for Managing Days of Excessive Heat

Each school should develop procedures to deal with excessive heat that are specific to their location and facilities, including:

- Modify or postpone school activities during periods of excessive heat (e.g. can outdoor activities be moved to indoor gyms or halls?)
- Identify any equipment that may become a burn hazard if left in the sun. (e.g. play equipment, hand rails, etc.)
- Minimise extended exposure of staff whilst undertaking outdoor activities such as yard duty, bus duty, maintenance works etc
- Ensure staff and students (particularly students with special needs) are appropriately supervised, including monitoring their hydration
- Ensure school lunch boxes are stored in cool areas
- Undertake normal first aid procedures in the event of a student or staff member becoming ill or distressed due to the heat
- Ensure that equipment such as air conditioners, fans, sun shades, etc. remain operational and are in good condition.

## Hydration

Encourage staff and students to increase hydration by ensuring accessibility to water bottles in class rooms and allowing for frequent drink breaks.

Drinks containing caffeine (tea, coffee, cola and some “energy” drinks) as well as drinks containing excessive sugar (soft drinks, colas, some “energy” and “sports” drinks) should be limited or avoided altogether.

## First Aid

Ensure that first aiders are familiar with the identification and appropriate treatment for heat discomfort, and that staff and students who may be more susceptible to the effects of excessive heat have been identified.



## Children in Hot Cars

Leaving children unattended in a car on a hot day can result in serious injury or death. Victorian legislation makes leaving a child unattended in a car a criminal offence. Schools should consider introducing appropriate signage and newsletter reminders to prevent this situation occurring.

### Resources

- *Excessive Heat (WorkSafe)*

### Related Topics

- First Aid

### Legislation

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*