

How to Conduct a Tailgate Talk

A Tailgate Talk is a brief training session on a single safety topic, typically held around the tailgate of a truck or another convenient spot. It should last 10-15 minutes with a small group of workers.

KEY POINTS

- Choose one safety topic per session.
- Keep it short and concise.
- Hold sessions with 6-10 workers.
- Ensure the location is comfortable and safe.
- Allow time for questions and answers.
- Document the training.

CHOOSE SAFETY TOPICS

- Focus on recent events or ask employees for suggestions.
- Use newsletters and local news for additional ideas.

PLAN LOGISTICS

- Limit sessions to 6-10 workers.
- Hold sessions earlier in the week (avoid Monday mornings).
- Conduct sessions weekly, dedicating specific time for training.
- Keep sessions under 15 minutes.

PREPARE AND CONDUCT THE SESSION

- Include visual aids and handouts.
- Familiarize yourself with the materials beforehand.
- Keep the presentation informal and avoid technical jargon.
- Involve workers in the discussion.
- Allow time for questions and have workers sign a training acknowledgment sheet.



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Louisiana's Tailgate Talk Series

Prevent Heat Illness at Work



The Louisiana Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Center serves training needs of local transportation agencies.

We are part of the Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC), which is a cooperative effort between the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Louisiana State University (LSU).

Timely Safety Briefings

Beat the Heat

Working in hot, humid conditions—especially in protective gear—can lead to heat stress. This happens when the body can't cool itself fast enough, and core temperature rises above 100.4°F.

Why It Matters

In hot and humid regions, like ours, the risk of heat-related illness is high. Long days, heavy labor, and direct sun exposure make job sites especially dangerous in summer.

Watch for These Symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Dizziness or disorientation
- Impaired judgment
- Muscle cramps
- Headache
- Nausea
- Heat stroke (a medical emergency)

Common Risk Factors:

- High temperatures and humidity
- Working near hot surfaces or equipment
- Intense physical activity
- Poor hydration, illness, or lack of rest

Stay Safe:

Hydrate often — don't wait until you're thirsty

Take breaks in shade or cool areas

Wear lightweight, breathable gear when possible

Know the signs of heat stress — and speak up if you or a coworker feels unwell

If someone shows signs of heat stress, get medical help right away. Move them to shade, cool them with water, and elevate their legs.

Resources

OSHA - Protecting Workers from the Effects of Heat

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3743.pdf>

CDC - Heat Stress

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/heat-stress/recommendations/index.html>

HSE - Heatstress Safety Toolbox Talk

<https://www.hsestudyguide.com/heat-stress-safety-toolbox-talk/>

Tailgate Talk Resources

Louisiana LTAP

<https://www.ltrc.lsu.edu/ltap/tailgate-talks.html>

NLTAPA

<https://nltapa.org/informationexchange/nltapa-tailgate-talks/>

T2 Tailgate Talks

https://www.cti.uconn.edu/cti/T2_Tailgate_Talks.asp

