



PREVENTING INSECT STINGS

Stinging insects include **bees, wasps, & hornets**. Outdoor workers at risk of exposure include construction workers, landscapers, painters, roofers, pavers, and any other workers who spend time outside.

PROTECT YOURSELF –*Workers should take the following steps to prevent insect stings*

- Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing. (*Ideally, long sleeves and pants*)
- Avoid strong perfumed soaps, shampoos, deodorants, and cologne.
- Wear clean clothing and bathe daily. (Sweat may anger bees.)
- Keep work areas clean. Social wasps thrive in places where humans discard food.
- Remain calm and still if a single stinging insect is flying around. (Don't swat at it)
- If several stinging insects attack you at once, run in a straight line to escape them.
 - Go indoors if possible and avoid big open areas
 - If unable escape the area, cover your face with something.
 - Do not jump into water as some insects will hover above.
- Individuals who are allergic to insect stings need to make sure their co-workers and supervisors know their condition and know how to use an EpiPen.
- Be aware of your surroundings, wasp and bee nests are often found in trees, under roof eaves, or on equipment such as ladders.

FIRST AID –*If a worker is stung by a bee, wasp, or hornet*

- Co-worker to stay with the stung person to ensure they don't have an allergic reaction.

Anaphylaxis is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic response that is marked by swelling, hives, lowered blood pressure, and dilated blood vessels. In severe cases a person will go into shock, which requires immediate medical aid as it can be fatal.
- Wash the site with soap and water.
- Remove the stinger using a gauze wipe or by scraping a fingernail over the area.
 - Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers.
- Apply ice to reduce swelling.
- Do not scratch the sting as this may increase swelling, itching, and risk of infection.
- Treat stings with over-the-counter products that prevent infection.

Information gathered from The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

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