

JUNE 1, 2015, 8 NEWS NOW  
By Brian Brennan

Heat is the number one weather-related killer in the Mojave Desert. When the body gets too hot from intense heat, the brain, heart and kidneys will all shut down, medical experts say.

High temperatures affect those working outside in the sun the most.

"It seems to get harder as I get older, but as I get older I seem to prepare better," said Javier Hernandez, Journeyman Carpenter.

"There are certain tricks that we do like wetting bandanas and using them to shade the shoulders and neck when the sun gets really hot around noon," said Kenny Stepuchin, general foreman, Labors.

However, some construction companies like the The PENTA Building Group takes an hour on the days that it's extremely hot so their workers can take a breather and prepare.

"It's about making sure everybody goes home the same way they showed up," one construction worker said.

Experts say even the most experienced people can forget the power of the sun and push themselves too hard. Tim Szymanski, a spokesperson for Las Vegas Fire and Rescue, said dizziness and nausea are just a couple of the signs one should look for when it comes to overheating.

Szymanski said it can be too late when dehydration escalates to heat stroke.

"They are no longer sweating, the skin is turning red, they are hot to the touch, their temperature is 104 to 106 they are literally burning up on the inside," Szymanski said.

Some construction workers say they've come dangerously close to having a heat stroke.

"You feel sick, you feel weak. It's even hard to pick up a piece of wood," said Stepuchin.

Many construction workers 8 News NOW spoke with say taking a break for heat safety is a good idea.

"One thing I learned is that no matter how hard someone is pushing you out here if you are thirsty get some water. It's not worth it, we all have families we want to get home to," Hernandez said.

Szymanski echoes that sentiment. He says if you're thirsty your body has already become dehydrated. Szymanski also said it's also important to remember that sugary, caffeinated or alcoholic beverages work against all of the water you've consumed.