



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
{{item.tracking_number}}

Agenda Item Number: 2

Agenda Date: August 17, 2022

In Control: Governance Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Development Services Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Michael Shannon

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Establishing a Task Force on Heat Illness Prevention for Construction Workers.

SUMMARY:

On April 28, 2022, Councilmembers Ana Sandoval and Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia issued a Council Consideration Request (CCR) requesting the establishment of a Task Force on Heat Illness Prevention for Construction Workers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Heat-related illness poses a significant risk to construction workers across the United States. Between 1992 and 2016, construction workers accounted for 6% of the U.S. workforce and over one-third of occupational deaths due to heat exposure. About 75% of these fatalities occurred during the summer months. Increased summer temperatures during the same time period were also associated with a higher number of heat-related illness.¹ Non-fatal heat-related injuries are even more common but often go unreported.² Currently, the Occupational Safety Hazard Administration

(OSHA) does not regulate heat illness prevention in the workplace but does provide general guidance.

While OSHA has recently begun the process of defining a heat-specific workplace standard, Councilmembers Ana Sandocal and Dr. Adriana Garcia have requested City staff in the meantime to consider locally tailored workplace solution practices and seek support from local employers to help address this critical health safety issue for all construction workers.

¹Heat related deaths among construction workers in the United States, American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 2019.

²CDC Blog: Heat Stress in Construction, CDC, 2020.

ISSUE:

As part of the CCR submitted on April 28, 2022, City staff was requested to assemble an ad hoc task force of stakeholders from the construction industry's workforce and management as well as subject matter and occupational health experts. The Heat Illness Prevention (HIP) Task Force would be charged with evaluating and recommending potential new or adopted heat illness prevention workplace practices and associated measures the City and local construction industry can take to ensure construction worker safety.

Among the potential heat safety practices and measures, the task force is requested to initially consider:

- Educational and training resources on heat illness prevention provided by the City;
- An ordinance requiring construction companies to provide workers with a 10-minute break in the middle of every four hours of work, similar to ordinances adopted in Austin and Dallas; and,
- An ordinance requiring construction companies operating in the City of San Antonio to submit a heat illness prevention plan to the City on a regular basis and display the plan at worksites.

To help facilitate these efforts, the City Manager's Office has assembled representatives of the following City departments to provide expertise advisory support to the HIP Task Force, they include Metropolitan Health District, Office of Risk Management, Human Resources, Public Works, and Development Services.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends referral to the Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee for discussion and recommendations.