Building a Workplace Risk Assessment Checklist to Reduce the Impact of Climate Change on Health and Safety

Checklist Overview

The What

- Transforming report into resource

- Create a tool based on the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Report

- Function as baseline risk assessment

- Built to tailor to geography, population, event

The Who

Tool for **employers and worker representatives** that are assessing climate-related health and safety risks within their organizations, including special considerations for those with employees in indoor and outdoor environments.

Sections address employer, facility, worker, community.

The Why

Across the spectrum of events, from acute severe weather disasters to intense heat waves, the **consequences of climate change directly and indirectly impact worker health.**

Depending on the location and nature of the work, some impacts may constitute a heavier burden on certain industries, trades, workers, and the communities they live in and serve.

The How

1. Review each item.

2. Develop an action plan that lists each item, who is responsible, what needs to be done, and by when.

3. Develop a communication plan to inform employees, customers, and the public of actions taken by the organization to protect workers and the public from climate-related hazards.

Major Sections

I. General Program Design & Planning

II. Heat

III. Cold, Polar Vortex

IV. Biological & Vector-borne Hazards

V. Flooding

VI. Emerging Challenges & Air Pollutants

VII. Resources
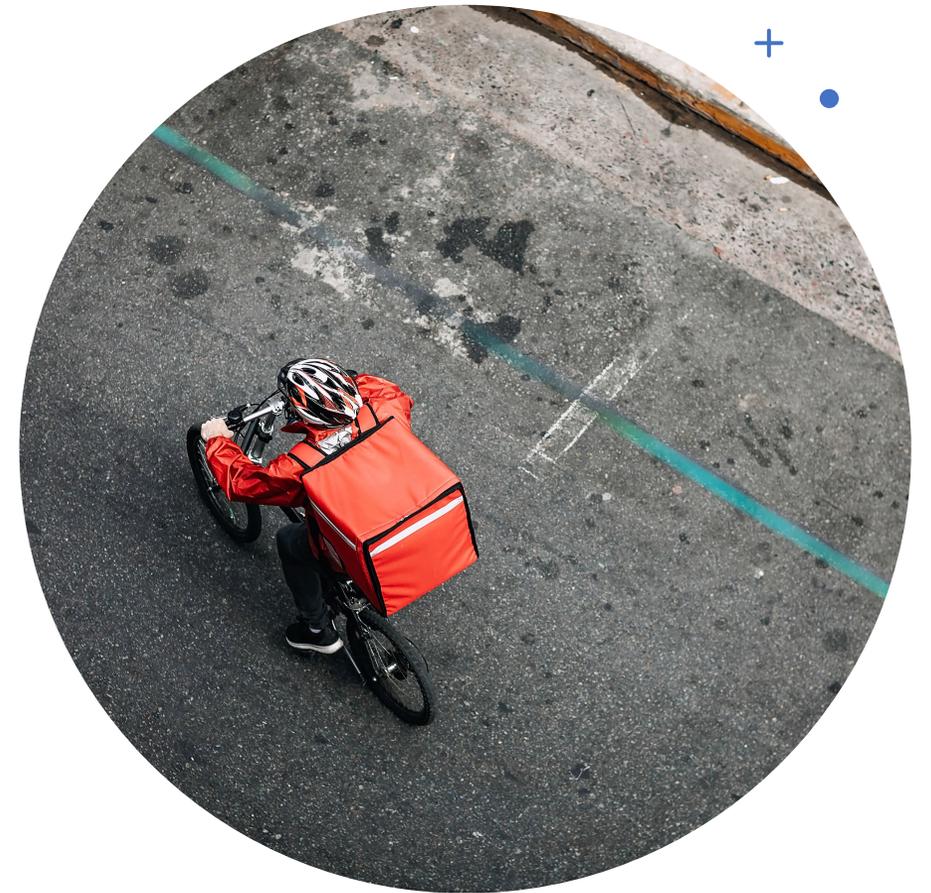
I. General Program Design & Planning

	Yes	In Progress	No	N/A
Has the employer developed a written climate change risk assessment program?				
Has the employer deployed a safety and health committee or other forum for frontline workers and other key stakeholders to participate in the development of the plans or programs?				
Has a plan been put into place that mitigates worker exposure to environmental hazards like mold, dusts, and fungi that can result from damp or wet events?				
Is there a program in place that describes workers' rights, regulations, and laws? Is it in a level and language that is easily understood by all at the site?				
Are there disaster site-specific training programs set up prior to anyone being deployed to the area?				
Has a hazardous waste training program been developed that addresses controls for workers tasked with cleaning up hazardous debris (e.g., ash, wastewater, etc.)?				
Is there access to local subject matter experts, liaisons, and/or community organizations that can assist with putting together plans				

II. Heat

	Yes	In Progress	No	N/A
Are there areas to protect workers from extreme heat and/or sun, including covered and shaded areas?				
Is there a plan to address workers wearing PPE and respiratory protection in hot environments?				
Is there ready access to potable drinking water?				
Is there a plan to address acclimating workers to heat? If so, does it address time to acclimatization (14 days)?				
Do workers inside or driving have proper ventilation? Air conditioning?				
Is there a plan for giving adequate work breaks?				
Is there a plan to address changes in oxygen availability in a near-surface ozone polluted area?				
Is there information and training to workers to identify hazards and symptoms of heat stress?				
Is there information and training to workers on regulatory protections for heat stress?				
Are sunscreen, sunglasses, hats, and lightweight clothing available to workers or is there a plan to address informing workers about utilizing protective gear?				

Notes:	

IV. Biological & Vector-borne Hazards

	Yes	In Progress	No	N/A
Is there information available to workers about the hazards of pesticides, insecticides, herbicides used to mitigate vector-borne hazards?				
Are PPE and protective clothing being used to prevent bites and exposure?				
Is there information available and training to workers to identify vector-borne hazards and symptoms associated with vector-borne exposures and disease? Does this include information about environmental allergens like pollens, molds, or poisonous plants?				
Is training available that addresses what to do when and if encountering wildlife or stray animals?				
Is there a plan and/or organization that the employer uses for wildlife hazards (e.g., trapping, relocating)?				

Notes:	

VI. Emerging Challenges & Air Pollutants

	Yes	In Progress	No	N/A
Are there any "climate friendly" alternatives being considered to lessen carbon emissions or becoming "greener"? • Retrofitting building? • Recycling? • Alternative energy production?				
Is there information and training to workers to identify hazards and symptoms of ozone rich (oxygen depleted) environments?				
Is there a program in place that includes information sharing and training on recognizing various air pollutants and the short- and long-term health effects?				
Can workers identify whether their workplace has appropriate ventilation?				

Notes:	

As you review and go through group TTX, consider if

- this captures essence of report?
- is valuable?
- is this adaptable?
- what is missing?
- how it might be used?
- it is in the right format?

Hurricane Harvey
August 2017
League City, TX
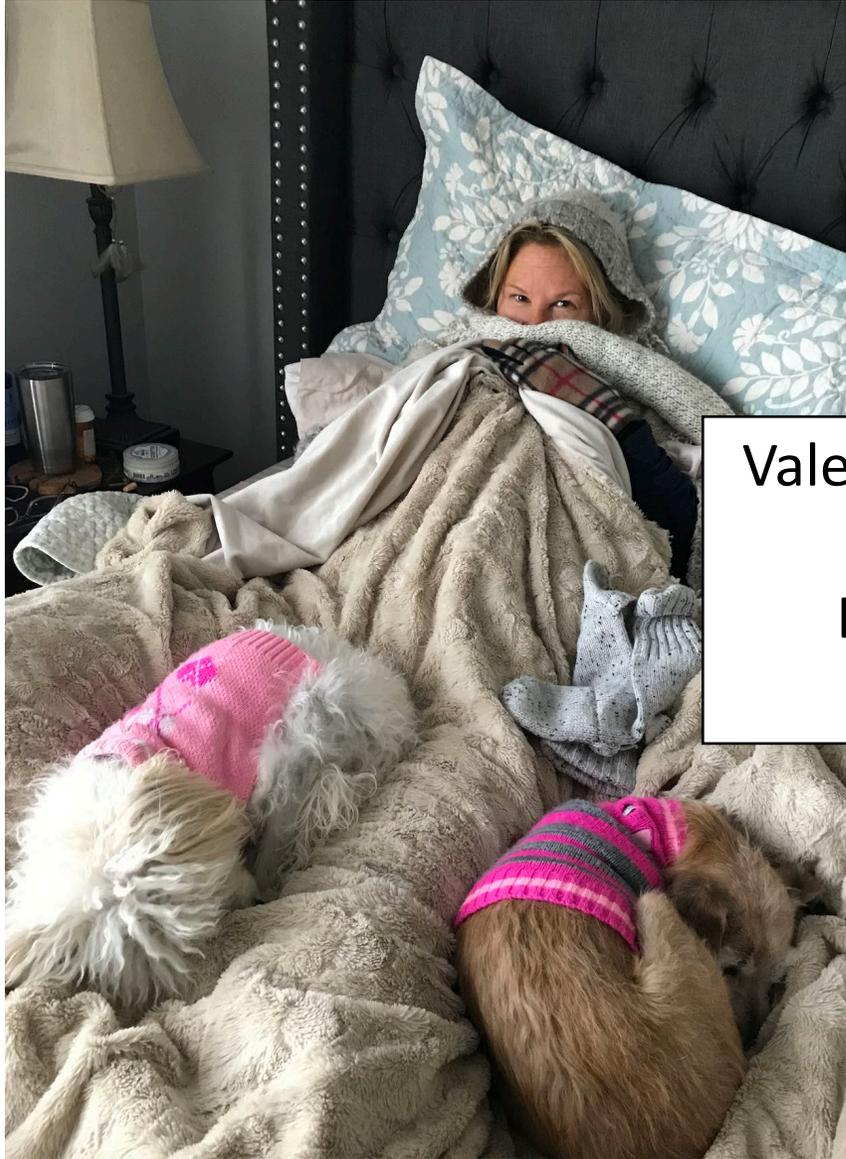
Valentine's Day Freeze
Polar Vortex
League City, TX
February 2021

Now on to the smaller groups and exercise

THANK YOU!