

## **TOOLBOX TALK #47**

### **OUTDOOR WORKERS AND SKIN CANCER**

The American Academy of Dermatology cautions outdoor workers to be aware of an invisible hazard: the sun's ultraviolet rays. Exposure to these rays for hours is a major risk factor for a number of skin cancers, including melanoma – the most serious form.

The Academy notes that outdoor workers receive more UV radiation exposure than other workers for a number of reasons:



- Outdoor workers spend long periods of time in the sun.
- Sweating may contribute to UV-related skin damage because it increases a person's photosensitivity of the skin, which can result in sunburns. Excessive sweating also can cause sunscreen to come off.
- UV radiation reflects off sand, concrete and light colored surfaces, so it can be hard for workers to avoid exposure.

On average, one person dies from melanoma every hour in the United States, according to the Academy. Outdoor workers can help reduce their risks of skin cancers by following these tips:

- Know that even on cloudy days, you're still susceptible to UV rays, as up to 80% can pass through clouds.
- Avoid the sun's rays when they are the strongest (between 10 am and 2 pm).