

No. 146/26

11 May 2026

Dear Colleagues,

Sun Safety RMG Communication Issued 11th May

This week, Royal Mail Group have issued a SHE (Safety, Health and Environment) Huddle covering Sun Safety as we approach the summer months and as members on delivery and those who work outdoors for Royal Mail and Parcelforce face sunny and hotter weather.

The SHE Huddle (FY26 021) on Sun Safety, attached, highlights the following key messages:

- 1. Cover Up** – Wear long, loose clothing to keep the sun off your skin. Your uniform is made from a special fabric to protect against ultraviolet radiation.
- 2. Protect your head** – Don't forget your head, face, ears and neck. Wear the wide brim hat that's part of your uniform – it's specially treated to protect against the sun. Remember to use sunglasses with UV protection.
- 3. Take breaks in the shade** – Come out of the sun when you have the chance, especially during the most powerful ultraviolet periods.
- 4. Use sun cream** – SPF 30 (Sun Protection Factor) or higher on any exposed skin; apply it half an hour before going outside, put plenty on and reapply it frequently.
- 5. Be skin safe** – Report mole changes (size, shape, colour, itching or bleeding) or any other concerns about your skin to your doctor as soon as possible – don't put it off, early treatment is important.

The RMG Huddle also covers information issued by Cancer Research UK that 86% of melanoma skin cancer cases are preventable. This statistic highlights the importance of sun safety and the potential for early detection and treatment to significantly improve outcomes for melanoma patients. Cancer Research UK further highlights the benefit of individual awareness and the importance of regular 'skin self-examinations'.

Importantly, the Huddle also confirms that: *'If you have a medical condition that can be exacerbated by heat, please make your manager aware'*. This is a key message, and CWU members are reminded of the following advice:

- Any individual who may be at increased risk in extreme heat due to age, underlying health conditions or taking certain medications should speak to their manager to discuss whether any duty adjustments are required in the event of a MET Office 'Yellow Warning' (and/or higher MET Office warnings).
- For individuals covered under the Equality Act and with a known disability, a required duty adjustment needs to be undertaken in line with and recorded on the Disability Risk Assessment Form.

- Colleagues who are new or expectant mothers also face an increased risk when working in extreme heat and should equally approach their manager. There is a separate Risk Assessment for these individuals.
- These duty adjustments need to be made with the individual's agreement and recorded on the Health Passport or relevant Risk Assessment.
- The use of the Health Passport should supplement and accompany the need to also undertake the relevant Risk Assessment. The use of the Health Passport does not replace the direct need to also undertake a 'Person Specific' Risk Assessment (disability, young person, new or expectant mother).
- For members who require these measures, it is vitally important that they also seek CWU support and assistance.

Area Safety Reps (ASRs) and Workplace Safety Reps Actions:

Area and Workplace Safety Representatives are reminded to:

- Work with Operational Managers and SHE Team Management to raise awareness about Sun Safety amongst all members who work outdoors across Royal Mail Group.
- Ensure that the RMG Severe Weather Guidance is followed and that SWMAs (Severe Weather Managers Assessments) are carried out as necessary and against MET Office warnings on heat. It is strongly recommended that pre-planning activity should start now, with all managers/PiCs (Person in Charge) familiarising themselves with the full Severe Weather Guidance and SWMA process in order to ensure that they are prepared for high summer temperatures.
- Ensure that individuals who may be at increased risk in extreme heat due to age, underlying health conditions, who take certain medications, and new or expectant mothers are aware that new or further duty adjustments may be needed to support them in the event of a MET Office 'Yellow Warning' (and/or higher warnings) for heat. These duty adjustments need to be made with the individual's agreement and recorded on the Health Passport and relevant Risk Assessment Form.

To further assist in promoting the Sun Safety message, also attached are the following:

- RMG/CWU Poster – 5 workers a day get skin cancer
- RMG/CWU Stay Safe in the Sun z-card leaflet
- CWU Heat Illness Guide
- CWU Sun Smart Poster

Further communications covering Sun Safety will be issued in due course, but where Branches and Safety Reps require any additional information on the above, or for any other enquiries in relation to this LTB, these should be referred to the DGS(P) Department at hford@cwu.org or acorbett@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Walsh
Deputy General Secretary (Postal)

5 workers
a day get skin cancer in Britain



You can
protect yourself
and stay safe in the sun

- Cover up
- Protect your head
- Take your break in the shade
- Use sunscreen

Be 'Skin Safe'



Remember to drink plenty of water on warmer days to avoid dehydration.



www.notimetolose.org.uk



Safety, Health, and Environment (SHE) Huddle (signature not mandatory)



Huddle Date:	11/05/2026	Ref:	FY26 021 Sun Safety
--------------	------------	------	---------------------

Audience:	Processing	Delivery	Collections	Distribution	PFW	Specific Work Area
	All employees who work outdoors					

Overview:	It is important you protect your skin outdoors and take appropriate precautions to reduce risks and protect yourself in hot weather or extreme heat.
-----------	--

Message



Purpose

As we approach the summer months and in preparation for sunny weather, we want all colleagues to feel confident in staying safe in the heat. Whether you are at work or out enjoying the sun on a day off, there are many things you can do to keep yourself safe.

Did you know?

Cancer research UK state 86% of melanoma skin cancer cases are preventable. Most skin cancers are caused by exposure to the sun. This may be long term exposure, or short periods of intense sun exposure and burning. The ultraviolet light in sunlight damages the DNA in the skin cells.

Remember to drink plenty of water on warm days to stay hydrated.

<p>1. Cover Up - Wear long, loose clothing to keep the sun off your skin. Your uniform is made from a special fabric to protect against ultraviolet radiation.</p> <p><i>We have a couple of examples here of layering to keep you covered up in the warmer weather. Uni-fit base layer and leggings or a unisex long sleeved polo.</i></p>	
<p>2. Protect your head - Don't forget your head, face, ears and neck. Wear the wide brim hat that's part of your uniform – it's specially treated to protect against the sun. Remember to use sunglasses with UV protection.</p> <p><i>We have a couple of examples here of head wear, the unisex explorer hat is a wide brimmed hat, the Unisex pioneer cap has a roll down neck protector to provide full neck coverage.</i></p>	
<p>3. Take breaks in the shade - Come out of the sun when you have the chance, especially during the most powerful ultraviolet periods.</p> <p>4. Use sun cream - SPF 30 or higher on any exposed skin; apply it half an hour before going outside, put plenty on and reapply it frequently.</p> <p>5. Be skin safe - Report mole changes (size, shape, colour, itching or bleeding) or any other concerns about your skin to your doctor as soon as possible – don't put it off, early treatment is important.</p> <p>If you have any medical condition that can be exacerbated by heat, please make your manager aware.</p>	

Actions

We need all managers to:

- Share this message with all outdoor colleagues.
- Print and display the posters in the unit to support sun safety messaging.
- Familiarise yourselves with the Severe Weather standard and guidance.
- To support an employee with a medical condition that may be exacerbated by heat, please refer to the Severe Weather guidance in supporting information.

Supporting Information

- To access the full Severe Weather Standard 5.1.9 click [here](#).
- The Severe Weather guidance can be found [here](#).
- To access the sun safety posters click [here](#).



STAY SAFE IN THE SUN

Protect your skin from harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun. Follow five simple steps to make sure you enjoy the weather, without putting your health at risk.



1 COVER UP

Wear long, loose clothing to keep the sun off your skin. Your uniform is made from a special fabric to protect against ultraviolet radiation



2 PROTECT YOUR HEAD

Don't forget your head, face, ears and neck. Wear the wide brim hat that's part of your uniform – it's specially treated to protect against the sun. Remember to use sunglasses with UV protection



3 TAKE YOUR BREAK IN THE SHADE

Come out of the sun when you have the chance, especially during the most powerful ultraviolet periods



4 USE SUNSCREEN

Use SPF 30 or higher on any exposed skin – apply it half an hour before going outside, put plenty on and reapply it frequently



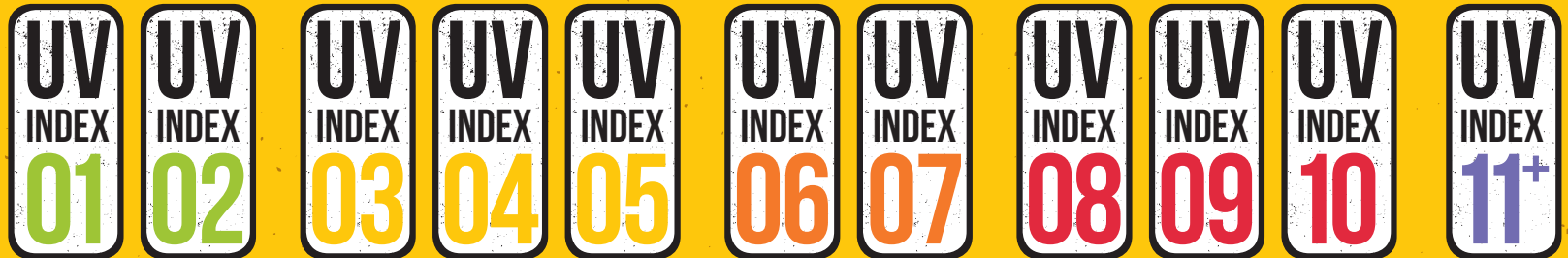
5 BE SKIN SAFE

Report mole changes (size, shape, colour, itching or bleeding) or any other concerns about your skin to your doctor as soon as possible – don't put it off, early treatment is important. Have a look at our simple skin check guide on the other page



THE UV INDEX

The strength of the sun's rays isn't connected to the temperature – check the UV index. You'll find the index on many weather forecast apps and websites



A TAN MEANS YOU'RE DAMAGING YOUR SKIN

LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	VERY HIGH	EXTREME
(1,2)	(3,4,5)	(6,7)	(8,9,10)	(11+)
You can safely stay outside	Take care during midday hours and don't spend too much time in the sun unprotected	Seek shade during midday hours, cover up and wear sunscreen	Spend time in the shade between 10am and 3pm. Covering up and sunscreen essential	Avoid being outside in midday hours. Covering up and sunscreen essential

GET TO KNOW YOUR SKIN

Checking for signs of skin cancer is as easy as A, B, C (and D). Be aware of how your skin normally looks – that way, you'll notice changes that could be signs of skin cancer.

- Found a new mole?
- Spotted any changes to the size, shape or colour of an existing mole or patch of skin?
- Noticed a new growth or sore that doesn't heal?
- Found a spot, mole or sore that hurts or is itchy?
- Seen a mole or growth that bleeds, crusts or scabs?

melanoma is most likely to occur. Use a mirror or get someone else to help you check.

Get any skin problem checked by your GP. There may be nothing to worry about, but if something is wrong, treating it early could stop it getting worse – and even save your life.

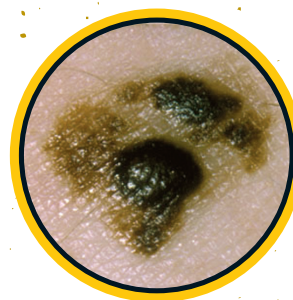
Look at Cancer Research UK's guide to spotting the signs of skin cancer at sunsmart.org.uk/UV-the-sun-and-skin-cancer/spotting-skin-cancer-early

Remember to check your neck and back too if they've been exposed – in men, this is where

IOSH working in association with Royal Mail

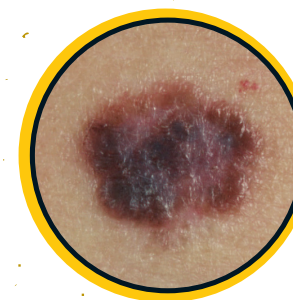


Working together to beat occupational cancer
Find out about the campaign at www.notimetolose.org.uk



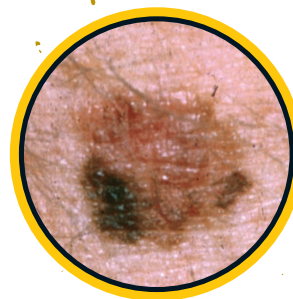
A SYMMETRY

two halves of a mole look different



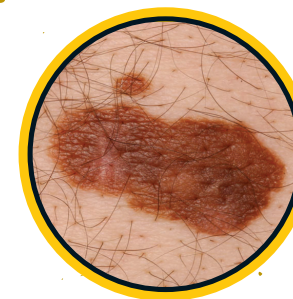
B ORDER

the edges of the mole are blurred, jagged or not regular



C OLOUR

the colour of the mole isn't even, with more than one shade of colour



D IAMETER

the mole is wider than 6mm (the size of a rubber on top of a pencil)

I
IVORY

Characteristics
Pale skin, light or red hair, prone to freckles. Burns very easily and rarely tans

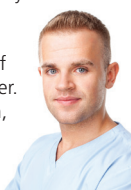
Sun protection
At the greatest risk of developing skin cancer. Needs to protect skin, preferably with clothing



II
BEIGE

Characteristics
Fair skin, likely to have light hair, blue or brown eyes. Some have dark hair but still have a fair skin. Usually burns but may gradually tan

Sun protection
At the greatest risk of developing skin cancer. Needs to protect skin, preferably with clothing



III
LIGHT BROWN

Characteristics
Light olive skin with dark hair and brown or green eyes. Burns with long exposure to the sun but generally tans quite easily

Sun protection
Should protect themselves in strong sunshine



IV
MEDIUM BROWN

Characteristics
Brown eyes and dark hair. Burns with very lengthy exposures but always tans easily

Sun protection
Should protect themselves in strong sunshine



V
DARK BROWN

Characteristics
Naturally brown skin, brown eyes and dark hair. Burns only with excessive exposure to the sun. Skin easily darkens further

Sun protection
Should protect themselves when outdoors in the sun for a long time



VI
VERY DARK BROWN

Characteristics
Black skin with dark brown eyes and black hair. Burns only with extreme exposure to the sun. Skin very easily darkens further

Sun protection
Should protect themselves when outdoors in the sun for a long time



HEAT ILLNESS GUIDE

FOR CWU MEMBERS

KEY FACT: HEAT ILLNESS HAPPENS IN THE UK AS WELL AS IN WARM CLIMATES.

Heat illness or heat related injury can cause a lot of damage and in some cases heat illness can be fatal.

DEFINITION OF HEAT ILLNESS

Heat Illness refers to a spectrum of disorders caused by environmental conditions whereby individuals become quickly unwell because of a rise in core body temperature.

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?

- 1 Heat illness happens when a body gains more heat than it loses.
- 2 Our body temperature rises when working or exercising or undertaking any manual activity during any increase in air temperature, or when in direct sunshine or when heat amplification occurs by reflecting off buildings and other surfaces. Heat amplification can often occur in vehicles too.
- 3 Heat is normally lost mainly by sweating. Usually, this helps the body to cool down and continue to function efficiently. In humid conditions, sweating doesn't work as well, and if too many clothes (or the wrong sort of clothes) are worn the body may keep in more heat than it should.
- 4 If more heat is gained than lost, our body temperature rises too much, which may lead to heat illness. HEAT STORAGE = HEAT GAINED - HEAT LOST
- 5 Risk Factors – You are at greater risk of heat illness if you are: • Tired • Hungry • Thirsty (dehydrated) • Or if identified as a vulnerable person due to another health condition.
- 6 An individual should be presumed to have heat illness if they experience or display any of the following: • Agitation • Nausea or vomiting • Cramps • Dizziness.
- 7 Worsening signs of heat illness include staggering, loss of coordination, collapse, loss of consciousness.
- 8 Where heat illness signs exist, STOP activity and seek medical assistance.

RISK BEHAVIOURS TO AVOID

DO NOT ignore any warning signs, if you or someone else you know or are working with start to display early signs of heat injury or heat illness you can call 111 to seek immediate guidance and advice or immediately call 999 if urgent First Aid is required.

DO NOT restrict water intake, even if you have limited access to toilet facilities you should still drink enough water to stay hydrated and return to work to use the toilet as required. Dehydration can be mild, moderate or severe depending on how much water your body is lacking, an early symptom to look out for is thirst.

DO NOT directly seek the sun, this is dangerous especially during physical work activity, seeking shade wherever possible can reduce how hot a person feels by more than 10°C

FURTHER GUIDANCE CAN BE FOUND BY SCANNING THE QR CODES BELOW:



@DaveWardGS The Communications Union

@CWUNews #TheCWU CWU.ORG

The communications union

ENJOY THE SUN BUT BEWARE:

Skin cancer kills – 70,000 new cases are reported every year in the UK and 2,000 people die every year in the UK.

FACT: Brown or black skinned people rarely get skin cancer, however they should still take care.

FACT: The sun also causes thickening of the skin leading to premature ageing and wrinkles.

FACT: Too much sun can cause heat exhaustion and sun stroke – both need urgent treatment.



The communications union

BE SUN SMART & SKIN SAFE

Every year 2,000 people in the UK die from skin cancer.

Skin cancer is the second most common cancer in the UK.

The number of new skin cancer cases increases every year and has doubled in the past 20 years.

The cause of skin cancer is nearly always over exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun or a sunbed.

There is nothing healthy about a suntan. Your skin darkens because it has been damaged.

You can still get sunburnt through light cloud.

Most cases of skin cancer could be easily prevented.

Sunburn causes permanent damage, the visible burns may heal but it increases your risk of skin cancer in later years.

WARNING
SUNBURN CAN DOUBLE
YOUR RISK OF
SKIN CANCER

PROTECT YOURSELF WITH THE 'SUN SMART' SAFETY CODE:

- 1. Cover up with loose** cool clothing to keep the sun off your skin. Wear a hat, preferably with a wide brim and sunglasses.
- 2. Seek shade** whenever possible, during your breaks, especially during the hottest part of the day, from 11am to 3pm.
- 3. Use a sunscreen SPF 30** or higher on any exposed skin. Use it half an hour before going outside and reapply it frequently.
- 4. Drink plenty of water** regularly, to avoid dehydration. It should be drunk before you get to the stage of feeling thirsty.
- 5. Be 'Skin Safe'** early treatment is important. Report mole changes (size, shape, colour, itching or bleeding) to your doctor.

@DaveWardGS The Communications Union

@CWUNews #TheCWU CWU.ORG