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CBP Launches New Heat Mitigation Effort to Advance Humanitarian Mission

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Newsroom

CBP Launches New Heat Mitigation Effort to Advance Humanitarian Mission

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TUCSON, Ariz. – Today, U.S. Customs and Border Protection launched a new heat mitigation effort to advance its humanitarian mission and announced new training and equipment to

effort to advance its humanitarian mission and equipment to reduce heat-related injuries along the southwest border. The effort will be tested in Tucson as temperatures rise during the hottest part of the summer.

In collaboration with Tucson Border Patrol Sector, Three Points Station and Casa Grande Station personnel will be supporting the deployment of new Heat Stress Kits/Go-Bags that will be distributed to 500 agents. CBP has launched a feasibility study to enhance heat stress awareness among the workforce and minimize the impact of heat exposure along the southwest border for migrants attempting to make the dangerous journey. The Heat Stress Kits will contain helpful items to mitigate potential heat stress injuries and illnesses for agents and migrants alike. This feasibility study will also provide valuable insights into the usability of the Go-Bags and how best to scale up across all other sectors along the southwest border.

“These kits may seem simple, but they could mean the difference between life and death,” said Tucson Sector Chief John Modlin. “Our agents are trained to know when to use them, how to use them, and will do everything in their power to rescue and save anyone suffering from heat stress. However, the message is still clear – if you are thinking of entering the United States illegally, don’t do it. As the summer heat approaches, human smugglers will continue to exploit vulnerable populations and recklessly endanger the lives of migrants for financial gain. The Arizona terrain is extreme, the summer heat is severe, and the miles of desert that migrants must hike after crossing the border are unforgiving.”

Over the years, CBP and the U.S. Border Patrol have launched many programs to advance the agency’s humanitarian efforts. For example, in the 1990s as part of the Border Safety Initiative, the Border Patrol Search Trauma and Rescue team (BORSTAR) was created; rescue beacons and plaques along the southwest border allowing migrants to call for help were installed; and the Arizona Air Coordination Center was established which dispatches the appropriate rescue resources based on 911 calls received from migrants in distress.

CBP continues to move forward and has implemented a comprehensive strategy related to heat stress awareness and response including educational/medical/training resources, leveraging technology, strategic communication efforts, as well as emergency response tools to support risk mitigation capabilities in the field.

In addition, CBP is announcing the upcoming release of the CBP Recognition of Medical Distress Training. The course was developed to ensure agents and officers have proper training to recognize signs of medical distress. The core of a trauma-informed approach is recognition and awareness of potential trauma and possible adverse medical and psychological effects for persons CBP encounters and those in custody. This course will cover topics such as the recognition of medical distress, trauma-informed care principles (awareness and training, medical support, holding processes), overview/roles and responsibilities of the CBP medical support system, to include response and referral to medical care.

This annual training is mandatory for all CBP operational employees of the U.S. Border Patrol, Office of Field Operations, and Air and Marine Operations. This will aid officers and agents as they will normally be the first contact an individual has with CBP, and so will be in the best position to aid an individual in medical distress.

CBP is the largest law enforcement entity along the southwest border that supplements state and county emergency response capabilities. CBP officers and agents can respond to emergency activations of rescue beacons and/or 911 call to render immediate aid and provide drinking water, as well as facilitate additional medical resources for those individuals experiencing heat stress signs and symptoms. CBP will continue to collaborate with internal and external partners to apply the most up-to-date training, and educational materials to reduce heat stress-related injuries and illnesses.

CBP continues to enforce U.S. immigration law. Current restrictions at the U.S. border will not change; single adults and families encountered at the southwest border will continue to be expelled, where appropriate, under CDC's Title 42 Order and the long-standing Title 8 authority.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials' welcome assistance from the community. Individuals can report suspicious activity to the Border Patrol and remain anonymous by calling 1-877-872-7435 toll free. Reporting illicit activity could result in saving someone's life.

For more details regarding this news release, contact CBP Public Affairs -Arizona at AZCBPPublicAffairs@cbp.dhs.gov or the Tucson Sector Public Affairs Office at tca-pao@cbp.dhs.gov or by phone at 520-748-3210. Tucson Sector is also LiveU capable.

Images:

<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/7262657/heat-mitigation-kits>

Video of press conference remarks:

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/846648/cbp-heat-mitigation-media-engagement>

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the comprehensive management, control, and protection of our nation's borders, combining customs, immigration, border security, and agricultural protection at and between official ports of entry.

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