Safety in Action: Job Site Face Recognition Panel

Onsite temperature checks are conducted by some employers to screen for those with fever potentially due to the coronavirus. Infrared technology measures the infrared energy of objects and converts them to an electronic image that converts to the apparent surface temperature of the object being measured. This technology is used in hand held thermometers as well as through ipad devices using special software to read out the results.

The FDA provides guidance for use of these devices to screen for fevers, potentially related to COVID-19 (https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/emergency-situations-medical-devices/non-contact-temperature-assessment-devices-during-covid-19-pandemic)

Advantages:

- temperature readings may be taken without being physically close to the person being evaluated
- readings may be taken in several seconds
- when readings are taken as recommended, readings are generally accurate.
- Eliminates potential exposure to persons conducting the screens

Test Set-up

- Readings should be taken in a controlled room environment (ambient temperatures of 68-76°F, humidity 10-50 percent)
- Avoid reflective backgrounds and strong lights
- Minimize air currents/draft
- Securely fasten the screen at an appropriate height to screen the face of the person
- Person to be tested has not engaged in physical exercise or recently been in a hot environment (come in from outdoors in hot weather)
- The person should be instructed to remove all barriers (face coverings, glasses), position their face in front of the screen and hold until the temperature is recorded.
- If a person does not meet the temperature requirement, they should be further evaluated to determine if they can be allowed on the worksite.
- The results of the screens may be saved for record keeping but should be kept separate from employee files, as protected health information.

There are many examples of infrared thermal devices available for purchase. All devices should be investigated for accuracy of use and appropriate for the environment.