

SafetySpotlight SafetySpotlight SafetySpotlight newsletter

BEATING THE COLD

How to stay safe when working in cold weather

Working in cold weather puts enormous strain on your body. To fight back, try these cold-weather safety tips while working on the job:

- Securely tie down or weigh down supplies so they are safe from gusts of wind.
- Wear a hat—20 to 30 percent of your body heat is lost through your head.
- Take frequent breaks in warm, dry shelters to allow your body to warm up.
- Sweep water out of passageways inside of buildings under construction to avoid slipping.
- Clean off and sand work surfaces covered by ice or snow to prevent falling.
- Use the buddy system—always work in pairs.
- Drink warm, sweet beverages, like sugar water or sports drinks, and avoid caffeinated drinks like coffee, tea, soda and hot chocolate.
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods like hot pasta.

FROSTBITE – A SILENT KILLER

Can you spot the symptoms?

Frostbite occurs after prolonged exposure to low temperatures or wet working conditions. Frostbite can be dangerous and even life-threatening. That's why it is important to look for the following symptoms when working in cold temperatures:

- Burning or tingling sensations
- Partial or complete numbness
- Discoloration of the skin
- Intense pain
- Blistering
- Hard or waxy-looking skin

Frostbite darkens gradually if left untreated and will eventually turn skin black. Nerve and blood vessel damage can lead to gangrene and amputation of a limb.

To prevent frostbite, wear loose-fitting layers of clothing and always cover your hands, feet, nose and ears. At the first sign of pain or if your skin gets cold and wet, it's time to look for a place to warm up.



Did You Know?

When your body temperature drops, your nerve cells and muscles work more slowly, which makes you more clumsy. This is easy to notice when tying a shoelace or fastening a button in cold weather.