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9 EASY WAYS TO PREPARE YOUR SITE AND CREW FOR WINTER WORK

Being prepared for winter conditions can increase worker efficiency and decrease the likelihood of workplace accidents and injuries. Business owners, project managers, site supervisors, and crew members all benefit from collective efforts to adequately prepare their worksites and their crews for winter conditions.



Wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing.

PPE and clothing should be chosen to suit the temperature, weather conditions, intensity and duration of activity, and job design. Dressing in layers makes it easier to regulate body temperature and minimize sweating.



Fuel your body with plenty of food and liquids.

Working in cold temperatures demands more energy than warm weather work. Your body works harder to create enough energy to maintain a normal temperature and you exert more energy working with the added weight and constraints of cold-weather PPE.



Implement a buddy system.

Work in pairs to help spot warnings signs of cold-related illnesses, such as confusion and sluggishness.

Cold stress generally refers to cold-related illnesses and/or injuries a person may suffer when they can no longer maintain a normal internal body temperature, such as frost bite or hypothermia.



Educate your team.

Key topics to review with your crew include (but aren't limited to)...

- Safe work practices and emergency procedures
- Fitness requirements
- How to identify and manage symptoms of cold stress



Adjust worker expectations.

Account for added bulkiness and weight of winter clothing and PPE, as well as extra time that may be required to ensure workplace safety.

DID YOU KNOW...

WATER CONDUCTS HEAT AWAY FROM THE BODY

25X

FASTER THAN DRY AIR.



Minimize the risk of icy surfaces and tripping hazards.

Keep walkways and working surfaces at grade, cover all cords and cables that cross walkways, ensure mats are laid flat and secured properly, monitor and mop spills and wet floors, and equip your site with adequate lighting to account for reduced daylight hours.



Consider equipment design and operation.

Cover metal handles and bars with insulating material and ensure all machines and tools can be easily and safely operated while wearing mittens or gloves. Train your crew for driving vehicles and operating equipment in winter conditions.



Reinforce work/rest schedules and have warm shelters on-site.

Heated warming shelters such as tents or cabins should be available on-site, and a warm-up break schedule encouraged. Work should be paced to avoid excessive sweating, which can be a catalyst for cold stress and related injuries and illnesses.



Monitor air temperature and wind speed.

The combined effect of these two factors is called "wind chill", which can be used as a guideline to help properly prepare for cold weather conditions.

How to estimate wind chill

8 km/h	light flag moves
16 km/h	light flag fully extended
24 km/h	raises newspaper sheet
32 km/h	blowing and drifting snow

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