



COMMONWEALTH
CONTRACTORS



SAFETY TOPIC OF THE MONTH

DECEMBER 2023

SAFE WORK PRACTICES FOR WINTER

Outdoor construction workers are exposed to many different types of hazards during the winter months; these hazards also come in the form of health risks. In extreme weather temperatures, your body must work harder to maintain its temperature. Heat leaves your body more rapidly during frigid temps, and you need to work hard to maintain a core temperature, so you don't face serious health problems. Although colder temperatures bring a unique set of challenges to workers, the equipment, and the project, with proper pre-planning and control measures, worker and jobsite safety can prevail.

FIRST WATCH:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CM3a4CEi4O4>

DISCUSS:

(check off each item as you discuss it)

- What are some of the risk factors we face during the winter months?
- How have we addressed those risks?
- What do you need to do to ensure your safety on the job?
- Where can we go to warm up if necessary?
- Do we know the signs of hypothermia? (Typical signs and symptoms will include shivering; slurred speech or mumbling; slow, shallow breathing; clumsiness or a lack of coordination; drowsiness or low energy; confusion or memory loss; and even loss of consciousness.)
- Has anyone ever had other cold weather health issues such as frostbite or trench foot?
- Slips and falls are more common in winter weather; do we have any areas that should be addressed (use sand or ice melt where needed)?
- Are the shoes we wear in winter appropriate (soles have good tread, water resistant)?
- Do we use portable heaters on the job? Is there a fire exposure (heaters too close to combustible materials)? Is there a Carbon Monoxide exposure (are heaters properly vented)?
- Does any of the equipment we use on site require special considerations in the cold weather? Electrical lines, hoses that may become brittle? Are fluids/oils rated for cold temperature?
- If we use an air compressor – do we drain the fluid from the tank?

REMEMBER:

EVEN IN COLD WEATHER - IF YOU ARE THIRSTY - YOU ARE ALREADY DEHYDRATED!

Typically, workers feel less thirsty in cold weather, which means they need to make more of a conscious effort to stay hydrated.

SIGN-IN SHEET

Today's Date: _____

Safety Meeting Leader:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

CONDUCTING A SAFETY MEETING

1. Gather employees together
2. Have all employees sign-in!
3. Review the material
4. Have an employee sum up the lesson
5. Lead by example!

Be sure to keep the instruction sheet and the sign-in sheet in your permanent files!

It may be used as evidence of training in a future workers' compensation case or at an OSHA inspection.