

Winter weather creates a variety of hazards that significantly impact everyday tasks and work activities. These hazards include slippery roads/surfaces, strong winds and environmental cold.

Wear Layered Clothing and Anti-Slip Shoes

Multiple layers of clothing allow you to adjust your protection based on current temperatures. Remove layers as you get warm and put them on as you get colder.

Bring a change of clothes in case you get wet. Dry clothing always helps to keep workers warm, especially when working outdoors.

To avoid slipping, wear winter boots with a strong tread. Spread sand or rock salt on the ice to provide a rough surface for footwear to grip.

Take a Break

When working outside during extremely cold or windy weather, take regular breaks to warm up before continuing work. If possible, take shelter indoors.

Drink Up

Even though it's cold out, keep hydrated by drinking water or other warm drinks. You will still sweat when working, even in cold temperatures.

Take Shelter

In windy conditions, and if the workspace allows it, set up a shelter to block the wind.

Know the Signs

Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of **frostbite** and **hypothermia**.

Frostbite occurs when skin and body tissues begin to freeze due to exposure to cold temperatures. Extremities, such as fingers, toes, nose and ears, are most at risk.

One of the first signs of frostbite is a tingling sensation similar to pins and needles. Numbness or pain may follow. The skin may begin to look pale or waxy and become hard.

If a co-worker is showing signs of frostbite:

- Move the person to a warm, dry area and remove any wet or tight clothing or jewelry.
- Do not rub the affected area. This could cause damage to the tissues.
- Place the affected limb(s) in a warm water bath. Do not make the water hot; tissues should be warmed slowly.
- Do not pour running water directly on the area. This may warm tissues too fast and cause more damage.
- After normal feeling has returned, lightly dry and cover the affected areas to keep them warm.
- Seek medical attention to ensure no further damage has been done.

Hypothermia occurs when your core body temperature drops to 95° or below. Hypothermia can happen when someone has been exposed to cold temperatures for an extended period of time or extremely cold temperatures for a short period of time. Extremely low body temperature is very serious and can be fatal.

Signs and symptoms include uncontrollable shivering, cold, bluish skin (especially the lips and fingers), slurred speech, uncoordinated movements, exhaustion, irritability, and irrational behavior.

- Call 911 immediately.
- Move the person to a warm, dry area.
- Remove any wet clothing and wrap the person in warm, dry clothing or blankets.
- Give the person warm sugar water to drink, such as sports drinks. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcoholic beverages.
- Do not place them in a warm water bath or rub their limbs. This could stop the heart.
- Try to keep the person awake if possible.
- Have the person move their arms and legs to create muscle heat.

Drive Safely

Be aware that the road can become icy, so drive slower and pay attention to changing conditions. Allow extra travel time.

EPP & Winter Weather

Do you remember what to do if you experience an unexpected **sudden body reaction**?

If you have one of these moments (slip on ice, miss a step, etc.), **engage your core muscles** to help prevent a back injury.

Remember:

- Use the **Life Line Grip** when descending stairs.
- Maintain **three points of contact** while entering and exiting vehicles.
- Stay on **cleared paths** (don't use parking meters as walking sticks).
- **Point your toe and go** when shoveling snow.
- **Inform others** of possible hazards (talk to your EPP volunteer).
- **Engage your core muscles** when lifting, pulling and/or pushing!
- Set your stepladder diagonally along its **line of strength** when clearing gutters, stringing and removing lights and decorations.

Be aware of your surroundings and situation as you work and play.

Ask yourself: Is this safe? Could I get hurt? Is there a better way or tool?

Use the EPP principles at home and work. Share these techniques with your families and friends and it might keep them from injury as well!

