

Safety-Gram

Title 45, Chapter 11

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Be Prepared for Old Man Winter

Colder weather moves hypothermia and slip-and-fall prevention to the top of many work sites hazards list.

Hypothermia occurs when a person's body heat is lost to a cool or cold environment faster than it can be replaced. An internal body temperature of 95° F or below signals hypothermia.

- Contact with or immersion in water can bring on hypothermia much faster because water cools body temperature 25 to 30 times faster than air.
- A worker who is perspiring heavily or drenched with rain/snow will lose body heat faster than the same worker under dry conditions will.
- Prolonged exposure to cold temperatures can result in serious health problems such as frostbite, trench foot, and hypothermia.



Danger Signs include:

Uncontrolled shivering * Slurred speech * Clumsy movements * Fatigue * Confused behavior

Have proper rewarming methods and first aid treatment in place. The basic principles of rewarming a hypothermia victim are to conserve the heat he/she has and replace the body fuel he/she is burning to generate that heat. Heat loss is reduced with additional layers of dry clothing, increased physical activity, and warm shelter. The victim should be adequately hydrated and fed carbohydrates, proteins, and hot liquids.

Slip and Fall Hazards:

Wintry conditions can contribute to slip and fall incidents and injuries. Tripping and slipping hazards should be addressed promptly in any workplace, but snow and ice exponentially increase the challenge of doing this in areas of high exposure such as outdoor stairways, parking lots and sidewalks.

Title 45, Chapter 11, §914.17- Slippery walkways shall be provided with cleats and handrails and or ropes.

Title 45, Chapter 11, §914.18- Regularly used walkways and travelways shall be sanded, salted or cleared of snow and ice as soon as practicable.