

GOT RISK?

District *Safety* Gram **PEOPLE-MISSION-SAFETY**



Coping with Cold Weather

Winter is upon us, and as such it is important to take precautions when spending time outside.

Aside from being a nuisance, excessively cold conditions may lead to serious problems such as hypothermia, frostbite, temporary loss or reduction of movement in limbs and trench foot.

Problems which may arise from overexposure to cold are often present in workplace situations that are high demand/labor intensive.

Here are a few warning signs of overexposure to cold weather:

- ☛ Extreme sensations of cold
- ☛ Loss of sensation due to cold weather
- ☛ Tingling of skin

- ☛ Stinging
- ☛ Aching of limbs and joints
- ☛ Numbness
- ☛ Discoloration of skin

Preparing for the cold:

- ☛ Wear multiple layers so they can be added or removed according to the temperature.
- ☛ Wear a warm hat on your head or helmet liner. Heat travels upward, and because of this, a large amount of body heat is lost from one's head. Hats can be a valuable tool in maintaining warmth. Knitted face masks can also be useful in deflecting cold and wind chill.
- ☛ Footwear should consist of insulated boots with layers of socks. When socks or boot liners become wet, they should be removed and replaced. Cold wet feet are one of the most common causes of foot problems, such as trench foot.
- ☛ Remember to wear warm gloves or mitts (preferably with liners which are removable).
- ☛ When dealing with the cold, the human body requires an increased amount of calories to keep warm. One should take this into account by supplementing meals with foods that contain carbohydrates and fats (within reason).
- ☛ Keep active. Moving while in the cold will help maintain warmth by raising body temperature and maintaining good circulation.
- ☛ If you think you are experiencing symptoms of hypothermia or frostbite, get to a shelter right away and seek medical help.

In extreme cases, the results of overexposure to cold can include loss of life or limbs. Workers are encouraged to wear multiple layers of clothing and plan out the safest way to execute the work day in regards to temperature and exposure.

Remember: Nobody is too cool for safety!

