

Winter is Coming: Stay safe while working in the cold

Working outdoors is an inevitable part of the job for many people across the country. And when the temperatures drop, it is important that workers wear appropriate protective clothing.

The Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety recommends a variety of tips for employees to follow when working in the cold:

- Wear jackets that are easy to open at the waist, neck and wrists to help control how much heat is retained or given off. If working in wet conditions, be sure the jacket is waterproof.
- Wear a wool cap to help prevent heat loss through the head.
- Keep all protective clothing clean. Dirt fills air cells in fibers and therefore reduces its insulation abilities.
- Avoid wearing cotton clothes because cotton gets wet easily. Wool and synthetic fibers do better at retaining heat when wet.



- Wear layers of clothing, as the air between the layers provides ideal insulation. Wearing layers also provides workers with the option to remove them if they get too warm or add more if they get too cold. Additionally, ensure the inner-most layer allows moisture to wick away, so sweat does not collect on the skin.

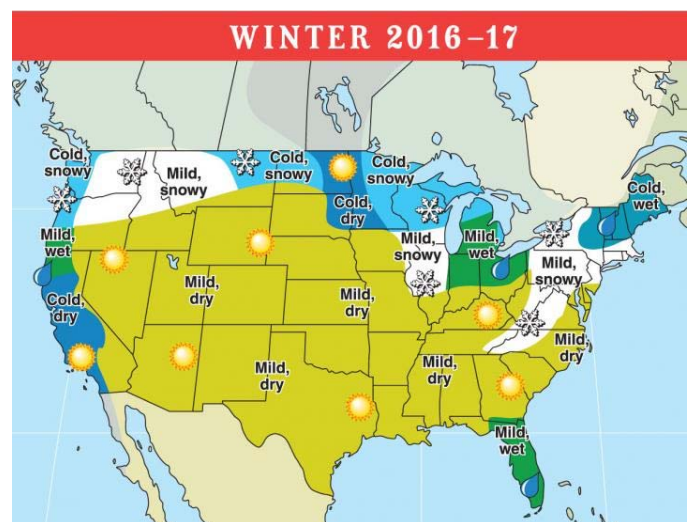
- Wear felt-lined, rubber-bottomed, leather-topped boots. Leather is porous and allows evaporation in boots to keep workers' feet dry.

- Keep extra socks on hand in case yours get wet.

(source: safetyandhealthmagazine.com)

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(picture by: Old Farmers Almanac, Michael Steinberg, Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologist)

It's flu season: Wash your hands

(source: www.bcit.ca)

Washing your hands helps prevent the spread of germs and disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended five steps to properly wash your hands.

1. Make sure to get your hands wet with clean, running water. You can use

- either hot or cold water. Then turn off the water and apply soap.

2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together. Don't forget the back of your hands and under your nails.

3. Do this for a minimum of

- 20 seconds. As a timer, recite the "Happy Birthday" song twice.

4. Rinse your hands by using clean, running water.

5. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel, or use an air dryer.



(Source: esfi.org)

12 Days of Holiday Safety

It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these tips. Tackle one a day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!

ESFi
Essential Safety Foundation



Day 1 What's that noise? Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they hear them.

Day 2 What a shocker! Before use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage.

Day 3 Two's company, three's a crowd. Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

Day 4 Is it working? Test your ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.

Day 5 Ouch! Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high traffic areas.

Day 6 Kids eat the darndest things! Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.

Day 7 Thirsty? Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree poses less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

Day 8 Make a wish! Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.

Day 9 Nice and warm. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn—decorations, trees, gifts, and curtains.

Day 10 Can't touch this! Consider installing tamper-resistant outlets/receptacles to prevent kids from inserting objects into the slots.

Day 11 Escape Route: Share your family fire escape plan with overnight guests.

Day 12 Hot stuff! Keep children away from cooking areas; use back burners and turn pot handles in away from little hands.

There's no greater gift you can give your family than a safe and happy holiday! Learn more at holidaysafety.org.

OSHA fines increase: What you need to know

New maximum fines went into effect for OSHA in August 2016. Here are the new maximums and a review on how OSHA calculates fines:

As of Aug. 1, 2016, the new maximum amounts for OSHA fines are:

\$12,741 for serious and other-than-serious violations, up from **\$7,000**

\$124,709 for repeat or willful violations, up from **\$70,000**, and

\$12,741 per day for failure-to-abate, up

from **\$7,000**.

That's a **78.2%** increase to catch up with inflation since the last time OSHA maximum fines were increased in 1990.

Federal OSHA can now increase maximum fines each year based on inflation. This change was included in the 2016 federal budget law.

States with their own OSHAs have six months to adopt maximum penalties that are "at least as effective" as federal

OSHA.

(Source: safetynewsalert.com)



Interesting Claims: Crazy Cat Lady

We love a good cat lady story. And this one relates to a work comp claim filed by a Flight Attendant. A woman brought her feline companion in her purse, not a proper carrier, aboard an international flight from Vegas to Frankfurt, Germany. The cat started going crazy on the plane. The crew had to put the kitty in a bathroom to keep him calm. This caused the "Cat Lady" to fly into a rage, punching one of the flight attendants in the face and screaming that her mob-ties would bring the plane down if she didn't get her cat back immediately. In the end, the plane did come down safely, drop-

ping her and her crazy cat at the Denver International Airport with the help of two F-16 fighter jets. However, the flight attendant had to be sent to Urgent care as she was bleeding from the bop in the face she received. Luckily it turned out to be a NO LOSS Time claim for the flight attendant.

(Source: claimcrazy.com)



Be Healthy: Opioid Drugs

On average, 52 people die every day in the United States as a result of prescription opioid overdoses, and statistics show that prescription painkillers such as Oxycontin, Percocet and Vicodin account for more drug overdoses than heroin and cocaine combined.

If you are injured, speak with your health care professional and do the research. Prescription painkillers can be extremely addictive and, according to the National Safety Council, are less effective than a combination of ibuprofen and acetaminophen.

Start the discussion

The council recommends talking to your family about the dangers and risks of opioid painkillers. Discussion topics should include:

- The potentially deadly dangers of mixing prescription painkillers and alcohol
- How painkillers are made from opioids – similar to heroin
- How to safely store medications in a locked drawer or container
- The importance of talking to grandparents, caregivers and houseguests about safely storing medications, and not leaving medications in coats or purses
- Keeping children away from prescription drugs

(source: safetyandhealthmagazine.com)



OSHA’s Final Rule on Exposure to Silica Dust

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued a final rule to curb lung cancer, silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and kidney disease in America's workers. They're doing this by limiting their exposure to respirable crystalline silica. The rule is comprised of two standards, one for Construction and one for General Industry and Maritime. Both standards contained in the final rule took effect on June 23, 2016, after which industries have one to five years to comply with most requirements, based on the following schedule:

Construction - June 23, 2017, one year after the effective date.

General Industry and Maritime - June 23, 2018, two years after the effective date.

Hydraulic Fracturing - June 23, 2018, two years after the effective date for all provisions except Engineering Controls, which have a compliance date of June 23, 2021

(source: osha.gov)

“About 2.3 million employees, daily, work where they could potentially be exposed to respirable crystalline silica”

Consequences of Insufficient Sleep

Most people don't get enough sleep. We are a society that burns the candle at both ends, a nation where people stay up all night to study, work, or have fun. However, going without adequate sleep carries with it both short- and long-term consequences. In the short term, a lack of adequate sleep can affect judgment, mood, ability to learn and retain information, and may increase the risk of serious accidents and injury. In the long term, chronic sleep deprivation may lead to a host of health problems including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and even early mortality. The price of insufficient sleep may be poor

health. Study after study has revealed that people who sleep poorly are at greater risk for a number of diseases and health problems. And now the search is on to discover why this might be. Lack of sleep exacts a toll on perception and judgment. In the workplace, its effects can be seen in reduced efficiency and productivity, errors, and accidents. Sometimes the effects can even be deadly, as in the case of drowsy driving fatalities.

(source: healthysleep.med.harvard.edu)



Tips for a Healthy Holiday Season

(Source: regionalfitnesscenter.com)

With Thanksgiving and Christmas back-to-back, it's easy to double your portions on the endless cookie exchanges, holiday parties and pot-lucks before the end of the year. And while it's okay to treat yourself to some goodies, don't wait until the new year to make it a resolution to be healthy.

1. Make a list — Before your festivities begin, make a list of reasons why you want to stay healthy during the holiday season.

2. Bring a dish — Volunteer to bring the vegetable tray or a fruit salad. This will guarantee you a healthy option when you eat your holiday meal.

3. Skip the dips — When you give up the extra gravy, cranberry sauce and cheese dip on your dishes, you'll also be giving up the extra calories.

4. Take a break — It takes approximately 20 minutes for your digestive system to tell your brain that you're full. Before you get in line for seconds or dessert, wait 20 minutes to allow your body the time to process.

5. Get outside — Baking or sipping coco is great, but a couple hours outside with the kids sledding or building snowmen could be a breath of fresh air.

6. Freeze leftovers — Keep food out of sight and out of mind. When you store food in the freezer, you'll have to defrost it before you can eat it again.

7. Keep on exercising — While you're probably taking a break from your normal routine, such as work or school, don't take a break from working out. Choose a simple exercise plan that you can stick to during the holiday season.

How to Make a Winter Survival Kit

Everyone should carry a Winter Survival Kit in their car. In an emergency, it could save your life and the lives of your passengers. Here is what you need:

- a shovel
- windshield scraper and small broom
- flashlight with extra batteries
- battery powered radio
- water
- snack food including energy bars
- raisins and mini candy bars
- matches and small candles
- extra hats, socks and mittens
- First aid kit with pocket knife
- Necessary medications
- blankets or sleeping bag
- tow chain or rope
- road salt, sand, or cat litter for traction

- booster cables
- emergency flares and reflectors
- fluorescent distress flag and whistle to attract attention
- Cell phone adapter to plug into lighter

Winter Survival Kit tips:

- Store items in the passenger compartment in case the trunk is jammed or frozen shut.

- Choose small packages of food that you can eat hot or cold.

911 tips:

- If possible, call 911 on your cell phone. Provide your location, condition of everyone in the vehicle and the problem you're experiencing.

- Follow instructions: you may be told to stay where you are until help arrives.

- Do not hang up until you know who you have spoken with and what will happen next.
- If you must leave the vehicle, write down your name, address, phone number and destination. Place the piece of paper inside the front windshield for someone to see.

(Source: readywisconsin.wi.gov)



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