November 2018

This month in safety…

Winter Hazards

With the winter months already here, now is a good time to review the hazards associated with the cold temperatures and icy conditions that can arise on the job site.

Explain Dangers

*Cold Stress – exposure to the cold can lead to frostbite and hypothermia

* Hypothermia – the body can no longer maintain its core temperature, causing persistent shivering, confusion, and poor coordination.

* Frostbite – parts of the body are exposed to extremely cold temperatures or come into contact with cold objects, causing the tissues to freeze.

* Slips & Falls – ice, snow, slush, wet surfaces, and mud (during a thaw) can cause slips and falls. A slip on the ground can cost you weeks off work. A slip at height can cost you your life.

* Carbon monoxide (CO) – CO is a clear, colourless gas that you can't smell or taste. It interferes with your body's ability to use oxygen. Even in small doses, it can kill you.

Identify Controls

* Wear several thin layers of clothing instead of one thick layer
* Wear gloves, as well as a hat or other head covering that can fit under a hard hat
* Wear one pair of thick socks or two pairs of thin socks
* If you get hot when you're working, open your jacket but keep your hat and gloves on

To prevent slips & falls:

* Clean the ice and snow off the soles of your boots and from access areas and work platforms
* Use sand, salt, or other de-icing material
* When working at height, be extra careful in the morning since there may be new frost and snow
* When walking, have at least one hand free to help keep your balance and cushion a fall

To prevent exposure to CO gas:

* When heating an enclosed space, use an indirect-fired heater
* Check propane vehicle-cab heaters for leaks and proper venting
* Operate engines outdoors when possible. When engines must be operated indoors, make sure the area is well ventilated and monitor CO levels regularly

Ten tips for keeping warm on the construction site…

1. Know the signs
2. Safety first
3. Layer up
4. Cover your head
5. Protect the extremities
6. Stay dry
7. Enclose your workspace
8. Artificial heat
9. Fuel your body with something warm
10. Keep moving

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