



NSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Cold Stress Safety

Working In Extreme Cold

Working in extreme cold may stress a person's heating system. When cold is combined with other stresses such as hard physical work, loss of fluids, fatigue or some medical conditions, it may lead to cold-related illness, disability and even death.

At very cold temperatures, the most serious concern is the risk of hypothermia or dangerous overcooling of the body. Another serious effect of cold exposure is frostbite or freezing of the exposed extremities such as fingers, toes, nose and ear lobes. Hypothermia could be fatal in the absence of immediate medical attention.

The cold temperatures and icy conditions that are often a part of Canadian winters:

- **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 and falls**—Ice, snow, slush, wet surfaces, and mud (during a thaw) can cause slips and falls.
- **Carbon monoxide (CO)**—CO is a clear, colorless 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.

Warning signs of hypothermia:

- complaints of nausea,
- fatigue,
- dizziness,
- irritability or euphoria.
- Workers can also experience pain in their extremities (hands, feet, ears, etc.),
- and severe shivering.

Workers should be moved to a heated shelter and seek medical advice when appropriate.



At Northern Safety Solutions and Workplace Management Systems, we appreciate your business and look forward to serving you in 2019



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