

>> TOOLBOX TALK – Seasonal Hazards - Spring

Spring marks the start of longer days and warmer weather. It also marks an increase in construction activities and this brings some additional hazards that must be given consideration on our worksites.

Explain Dangers

Changing Temperatures

While spring is a nice reminder that summer is on the way, temperatures can still remain unpredictable.

- Cold morning conditions warm significantly by end of day. This can increase the risk of heat exhaustion and dehydration.
- Working in the rain can place workers at risk for hypothermia, particularly if working in cooler climates.
- With more outdoor work comes increased exposure to the harmful effects of UVA and UVB rays.

Ground Conditions

Spring thaw, runoff and increase in wet weather can create hazardous ground conditions; in particular:

- Slip and fall hazards for workers in wet, muddy conditions.
- Hazardous driving conditions for mobile equipment including loss of traction and sliding.
- Trench cave-ins.
- Ground collapse along with any supported equipment/materials (i.e. scaffolding, mobile equipment etc.)

Hazardous Driving Conditions

Seasonal weather can also contribute to hazardous driving conditions, including:

- Reduced visibility (i.e. rain, fog).
- Slippery road conditions

Electricity

Rainy conditions can increase hazards when using electricity on a worksite.

- Using electric tools/extension cords in wet weather or around standing water can cause electrocution/electric shock.

Inactivity

Starting up work after the winter months and periods of inactivity can also be a cause for concern.

- Workers may be less physically conditioned at the start of the season. This may put them at an increased risk for injury.
- Equipment that has been inactive over the long cold winter months may not be ready to operate at peak performance.

Controls

- Dress in layers that can be removed. Use waterproof clothes when necessary and pack spare dry clothes. Take warm up breaks, when required, and stay hydrated. Apply sunscreen when working outside.
- Ensure treads of safety footwear are in good condition and kept free of dried mud. Walk cautiously in wet or muddy conditions. Evaluate ground conditions prior to operating equipment
- Inspect trenches daily and after changes in weather. Utilize trench boxes.
- Regularly inspect the ground supporting any temporary structures or equipment (i.e. scaffolds). Use sills to more evenly distribute load.
- Drive to road conditions. Keep windows clear of mud and grime. Bring spare windshield wash.
- Use proper tools – do not use power tools that are not rated for use in wet environments. Use only GFCI. Don't walk through standing water without assessing for ground conditions and potential electrical hazards.
- Incorporate a stretching routine, prior to start of work.
- Ensure that pre-season inspections and maintenance is carried out for all equipment.

Discussion

Ask workers if they can think of any additional hazards caused by the change in seasons. Demonstrate a stretching routine.



TOOLBOX MEETING FORM

Date: _____ Project: _____

Supervisor: _____ No. in Crew: _____ No. Attending: _____

Review Last Meeting:

	Names of Attendees (Signature Required)
Topics Discussed (policies, practices, procedures, hazard assessment):	
Suggestions Offered:	
Action(s) to be Taken:	
Injuries/Accidents Reviewed:	

Supervisor's Remarks: _____

Signature: _____