

WORKING IN EXTREME COLD

OVER ►

Working in cold, wet, or windy conditions can be dangerous—even when temperatures are above freezing. Wind removes body heat rapidly, increasing the risk of serious cold-related injuries. Extreme cold conditions generally exist when the wind chill reaches -32°C (-25°F) or colder. Prolonged exposure can lead to frostbite and hypothermia, both of which can cause permanent injury or become life-threatening if not addressed.

Cold-Related Injury Prevention Tips

- » Identify situations and conditions that might expose workers to cold-related injuries.
- » Know what you can do as an employer to prevent exposure.
- » Know what you can do as a worker to prevent frostbite & hypothermia.



NLCSA
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR
CONSTRUCTION SAFETY ASSOCIATION



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TRAFFIC CONTROL AWARENESS

Be Aware of the Warning Signs

FROSTBITE

- Cold, pale, or hard skin
- Numbness or “pins and needles” sensation
- Most common on fingers, toes, ears, nose and face
- Skin may become red and painful as it warms

HYPOTHERMIA

- Uncontrollable shivering
- Slurred speech
- Poor coordination or clumsiness
- Confusion or impaired thinking
- Blue lips or fingers
- Drowsiness or weakness

Know How to Work Safely in Extreme Cold

- Dress in **layers** instead of one heavy layer
- Wear **wind-resistant outer layers**
- Protect your **head, face, ears, hands, and feet**
- Wear warm socks and **footwear that is not too tight**
- Change wet clothing immediately
- Take **frequent short breaks** in a warm shelter
- Stay hydrated—**drink warm beverages**
- Eat warm, **high-energy foods**
- **Avoid excessive caffeine**
- Watch for signs of cold stress in co-workers
- Avoid exhaustion—fatigue increases cold injury risk
- Know when to stop work if conditions become unsafe

Higher Risk Workers

Workers may be at increased risk if they:

- Are fatigued or physically exhausted
- Have certain medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, heart conditions)
- Are taking medications that affect circulation or alertness
- These workers should take extra precautions and speak with a supervisor if conditions become unsafe.