



Weekly Safety Meeting

Frostbite

During winter, many of us will continue to work outdoors, exposed to inclement weather. Just as heatstroke is a serious problem in the summer, frostbite can cause serious injury in the winter. It is important to be able to recognize frostbite symptoms and protect yourself from this serious condition. Low temperatures, humidity, and wind velocity all are contributing factors to overexposure from the cold. Usually, the victim is unaware of frostbite until someone else observes pale, glossy skin.

Frostbite occurs when crystals form, either superficially or deeply, in the fluids and soft tissues of the skin. Frostbite can be more severe when the area is thawed and then refrozen. Frostbite usually affects the nose, cheeks, ears, fingers, and toes.

Frostbite is a cold-related emergency that may quickly become life or limb threatening. Preventing cold-related emergencies includes not starting an activity in, on, or around cold water unless you know you can get help quickly in an emergency.

Be aware of the wind chill. Dress appropriately and avoid staying in the cold too long. When appropriate, wear a hat and gloves with layers of clothing. Drink plenty of warm fluids or warm water but avoid caffeine and alcohol. Stay active to maintain body heat. Take frequent breaks from the cold. Avoid unnecessary exposure of any part of the body to the cold. Get out of the cold immediately if the signals of frostbite appear.

Frostbite Symptoms:

- Skin color goes from red (flushed) to white or grayish yellow;
- Pain is felt early and subsides completely;
- Blisters may appear later; and
- Affected part feels very cold and numb.

Ways to Prevent Frostbite:

- Keep all of the extremities covered. In severely cold or windy weather or when riding on and open vehicle, wear a ski-type mask to cover the cheeks;
- Carry spare mittens, liners, and socks in case the ones you're wearing become wet;
- Make sure that gloves, socks and footwear do not fit so tightly that they can cut off circulation;
- Check yourself for frostbite by making sure you can move your fingers and toes, and that you still have feeling in your face; and
- Don't work alone – you and your companion should keep an eye on one another for signs of frostbite.

TEN FINGERS...TEN TOES...IF YOU'RE NOT SAFE...WHO KNOWS!!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests