



SITE SAFETY MEETING - TOOL BOX TALK

Working in the Cold

Since you work outdoors in the elements it is necessary that you understand the effects of cold weather and how to prevent serious injury. This Toolbox Meeting topic addresses frostbite and hypothermia – two conditions that construction workers face when working in cold environments.

Winter is upon us. Although some parts of the country are milder than others, we must all deal with cold temperatures and wet, windy or snowy conditions. Weather can vary daily, and from one job site to another. Construction workers are often affected by weather extremes so it is important for you to be prepared and that you protect yourself from the elements with the proper clothes for the conditions.

Symptoms of Frostbite and Hypothermia

- When **frostbite** occurs, the skin is cold to the touch, white, and has a waxy appearance. If the skin has become frozen, it will be hard and look blotchy white to yellow or blue-gray.
- **Hypothermia** occurs whenever the body's core temperature is 95 degrees F or less. (normal body core temperature is 98.6 F) In mild cases of hypothermia, the person may experience symptoms such as shivering, confusion, and stumbling. In severe cases, the person may lose consciousness, *stop* shivering, tighten up, experience a slowed pulse and / or breathing, etc.

Preventing Frostbite and Hypothermia

1. Check the weather conditions daily before going to work.
 - Wear appropriate clothing to match the expected weather conditions.
 - Layer your clothing, so you can adjust to changing temperatures.
 - Wear hats, boots and gloves to protect easily exposed areas of the body.
2. Limit your exposure to cold weather. When possible, take breaks in dry, warm areas.
3. Try to avoid becoming fatigued or exhausted.
4. Drink warm drinks throughout the day. Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
5. Eat a proper diet.
6. Use a "Buddy System", where you work together with another person.
7. If you think that you may be experiencing symptoms of frostbite and / or hypothermia, obtain medical assistance immediately.

Questions to start discussion:

1. *What are two dangerous conditions that you face when working in cold environments?*

2. *What are the symptoms of frostbite? Symptoms of hypothermia?*
3. *How can you prevent frostbite and hypothermia?*
4. *What should you do if you suspect you are experiencing frostbite or hypothermia?*

Meeting Notes:

Employee Comments / Concerns: _____

Other Safety issues to be addressed on the job:

Training Record: Date: _____ Jobsite: _____ By: _____ Title: _____

Employee Name	Emp #	Signature	Employee Name	Emp #	Signature
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Tool Box Talks are employee safety meetings designed to serve as 15 minute on-site training sessions focused on key topics relative to your work. Site superintendents or foremen are responsible for holding meetings each week usually during a morning break. This important segment of your general safety program encourages open discussion on the topic of the week and allows employees to share their experiences about accidents and safe or unsafe work practices. Recordkeeping is mandatory and all involved must sign off on each session.

Topics for your company could include: electrical safety, excavation and trenching safety, fall protection, scaffold safety, stairway and ladder safety, hazard communication, fire safety, personal protective equipment, tool safety, materials handling, etc.

Sample Tool Box Talks are provided compliments of the Safety Committee of **the Hartford County Homebuilders Association** in cooperation with the credited source of this Tool Box Talk.

Tool Box Safety Talks can be purchased from the National Association of Homebuilders 1-800 368-5242, www.nahb.com or may be available through your business insurance provider. For more information on Tool Box Talks contact the HBA office 860 563-4212.

BUILD SAFELY – THINK SAFETY

Tool Box Talk Source: Ohio Casualty Insurance Company

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