

Winter Job Safety



Keep warm and stay safe in cold weather.

Cold weather injuries are a concern to everyone, especially people working outdoors. Just like any other ailment, the best treatment for cold injury is prevention. Lowe's is happy to provide this information as a service to you. Drink plenty of fluids, maintain your calorie intake, dress appropriately for the weather conditions and warm up as needed. Watch your coworkers for symptoms and treat them as needed. Always have suspected victims checked by proper medical authorities.

Cold weather injuries fall into two major categories: **non-freezing** and **freezing**.

Non-Freezing Injuries

Non-freezing cold injuries normally occur in temperatures between 32 and 55 degrees Fahrenheit, especially in damp conditions.

Chilblains: A mild form of cold weather injury, usually limited to the hands and fingers. It most often occurs when the hands are exposed to cold, damp conditions.

Symptoms

- Is the skin swollen, red or tender?
- Is the skin warm to the touch?
- Is there aching or numbness in the afflicted area?

Treatment Procedures

- Move the person to a warm dry area.
- Loosen or remove any damp or tight clothing.
- Find qualified medical aid for the victim.

Hypothermia: Can be deadly and should be treated as a medical emergency. Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster that it can be generated, resulting in lowered body core temperature.

Symptoms

- Does the person exhibit unusual or erratic behavior?
- Is the individual dizzy or slurring words?
- Is there a lack of coordination or loss of consciousness?

Treatment Procedures

- Move the person to a warm dry area.
- Loosen or remove any damp or tight clothing.
- Find qualified medical aid for the victim.

Freezing Injuries

Freezing injuries occur in temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Frost nip: Occurs when skin freezes at the surface, after exposure to sub-freezing temperatures. Exposure to damp conditions speeds the onset of frost nip.

Symptoms

Is there aching, stinging or numbness in the afflicted area?

Does the skin appear red or swollen?

Is the skin overly dry?

Treatment Procedures

Move the person to a warm dry area.

Loosen or remove any damp or tight clothing.

Find qualified medical aid for the victim.

Frostbite: Can result in the loss of life or limb and should always be treated as a medical emergency. Frostbite is the freezing of tissue beneath the outermost layer of skin.

Symptoms

Does the skin appear red, swollen or extremely dry?

Does the skin feel cold to the touch?

Is the skin hard and lacking elasticity?

Treatment Procedures

Move the person to a warm dry area.

Loosen or remove any damp or tight clothing.

Find qualified medical aid for the victim.

Never attempt to warm a cold injury with hot water or by rubbing the afflicted area. Cold injuries are extremely serious and should always be examined by a qualified medical authority.

In the fight against cold injuries and lost work time, the best defense is a good offense. Remember the acronym **COLD**.

- **Clean:** Always wear clean cloths. Clean clothes insulate your body from the cold more effectively than soiled ones.
- **Overheating:** Avoid overheating, it causes you to sweat, dampening your clothing and leaving you more susceptible to cold.
- **Layer:** Layering allows you to add or remove clothing and adjust to temperature changes.
- **Dry:** Moisture speeds the onset of cold injury. Staying dry helps maintain your body temperature.

Was this information helpful? Please [let us know](#) your do-it-yourself experiences. We'd love to hear from you!

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