

KSU Facilities Safety Bulletin

Volume 13, Issue 11

November 2, 2020

Cold Stress

Employers and employees must plan for work in cold weather. Keep the following recommendations in mind when working in cold environments:

Protective clothing is the most important way to avoid cold stress. The type of fabric also makes a difference. Keep the following recommendations in mind when working in cold environments:

- Wear at least three layers of clothing. An inner layer of wool, silk or synthetic to wick moisture away from the body. A middle layer of wool or synthetic to provide insulation even when wet. An outer wind and rain protection layer that allows some ventilation to prevent overheating.
- Wear a hat or hood. Up to 40% of body heat can be lost when the head is left exposed.
- Wear insulated boots or other footwear.
- Keep a change of dry clothing available in case work clothes become wet.
- Loose clothing allows better ventilation of heat away from the body.
- Do not underestimate the wetting effects of perspiration. Oftentimes wicking and venting of the body's sweat and heat are more important than protecting from rain or snow.

Drink plenty of liquids. It is easy to become dehydrated in cold weather.

- Perform heavy work during the warmer parts of the day.
- Use the buddy system to keep an eye on each other and watch for signs of cold stress.
- Take frequent breaks and consume warm, high calorie food and complex carbohydrates to maintain energy reserves.

Control temperatures as much as possible.

Increase safety awareness with training. Disseminating vital information on cold stress recognition and treatment is important.

Source: <https://vividlearningsystems.com/courses/osha/cold-stress-prevention>

November Vivid Courses

All: Cold Stress

Slips, Trips, and Falls Overview

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Recent statistics from the Congressional Accountability Office of Compliance indicate that employee falls are private industry's third leading cause of workplace fatalities. **Around 600 workers die from a fatal slip, trip, or fall, each year.**

Believe it or not, most falls occur on flat surfaces like plant floors. Common causes are slippery areas, improperly stored items, foreign objects, and floor surface issues.

Reporting hazards you see in and around the workplace and following good housekeeping practices are the best defense against a serious fall for you or one of your co-workers. What is the 'good housekeeping' principle? It means that when a worker encounters a spill, or finds debris in a walkway, they first recognize the impact this material might have for colleagues negotiating the path, and then act immediately to clear the hazard. In general, good housekeeping means keeping all places of employment clean, orderly, and sanitary, including storerooms, service rooms, passageways, and bathrooms. Think of picking up trash on the floors at home or children's toys left out on a staircase, and it is easy to understand the idea.

As part of good housekeeping practices, safety professionals should be able to answer "yes" to the following questions:

- Do stairways and stairwells have smooth, continuous handrails and slip-resistant stair surfaces?
- Is lighting adequate in work areas and passageways?
- Is there proper drainage for wet processes and dry places to stand where practical?
- Do exposed walking surfaces have sufficient texture or treatment for safe traction?

Source: <https://vividlearningsystems.com/courses/5-minute/slips-trips-falls-overview>