

Greetings K-State Faculty and Staff,

My name is Aaron Wilkins and I am honored to be your new Occupational Safety and Health Program Manager. I was born and raised in Northeastern Colorado, and moved to Topeka, KS in December of 2015 to take a position as Safety Coordinator at Oldcastle Precast in Topeka. I am extremely excited to be a part of your team. I look forward to learning about the people employed here and the processes and tasks they encounter.

Why safety you say? I choose safety as my career because I like most people, spend most of my life at work. However, it should not affect my time away from work. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, safety is defined as "Freedom from harm or danger." I cannot think of a more powerful word than the first word in this definition, freedom. I guess everyone needs to decide what freedom means to each individual, but I think it would be difficult to be "free" if we are injured or become ill as a result of coming to work. That is why safety, we work to support our families and cannot do so sick or injured. Rest easy the answer is simple, SAFETY is really just AWARENESS. Thinking about what we do before we do it. Identify the task, break the task down into steps, identify hazards, and develop corrective actions for those hazards.

If you have questions, suggestions or comments, keep them to yourself. Just kidding (these are jokes people), I currently reside in Dykstra 138 or I can be reached by e-mail: aaron5667@ksu.edu or by phone 785-532-1715, please feel free to reach out and I will do my best to help.

Kansas Winter Weather Awareness

Wintertime poses a wide range of threats to the American public. Whether it be vehicle accidents caused by slick roads, exposure to the cold, or fires resulting from the improper use of heaters, hundreds of people are injured or killed each year as a direct result of winter weather. Kansas is no exception!

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow or freezing rain over a few hours to a massive blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states while others affect only a single community. Conditions can change in an instant!

High winds, freezing rain or sleet, heavy snowfall, and dangerously cold temperatures are the main hazards associated with winter storms. Damage from ice storms or snowstorms can maroon people at home without utilities or other services for days after an event. Slick roads from ice or snow buildup can result in large numbers of vehicle accidents. Severely cold temperatures and wind chills during and after a winter storm can lead to hypothermia and kill anyone caught outside for too long. The aftermath of a winter storm can impact a community or region for days, weeks, or even months, incurring steep economic costs.

*Kansas Weather-
Related Deaths*
Over the Past 20 Years

☁	Tornado: 37	
🌊	Flash Flood: 23	
⚡	Lightning: 10	
❄️	Driving in Ice/Snow: 300+	



Terms to Know:

- **Blizzard:** *Blowing and/or falling snow with winds of at least 35 mph*, reducing visibilities to a *quarter of a mile* or less for at least three hours. Winds lofting the current snow pack and reducing visibilities without any falling snow is called a ground blizzard.
- **Freezing Rain:** Caused by rain falling on surfaces with a temperature below freezing. The rain freezes upon contact with the ground. Large build-ups of ice can down trees and power lines and coat roads.
- **Sleet:** Rain/melted snow that has begun refreezing when it reaches the ground. Sleet tends to be softer than hail and is easily compacted. Sleet can make roads slippery very quickly.
- **Wind Chill:** The *apparent temperature* the body feels when wind is factored into the equation.



Rain	Freezing Rain	Sleet	Snow
Frozen precipitation falls through warm air and melts into rain.	Frozen precipitation falls through warm air and melts into rain which falls and freezes on cold surfaces, coating them in ice.	Frozen precipitation falls through warm air and melts, it then falls through another cold layer, refreezing into sleet before hitting the ground.	Snow falling through only cold air never melts.

Source: <https://www.weather.gov/top/winterprepare>