

# Winter Hazards And Cold Weather: What Workers Need To Know

Now that winter has [returned in full force](#) and Pennsylvania – along with much of the East Coast – is experiencing a seemingly non-stop series of storms, we felt it was time to revisit the important topic of winter workplace safety.



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## Winter Safety Basics

The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) provides an extensive overview of how to [prevent injuries and illness during winter weather](#). Should an injury or illness arise, whether in the workplace or not, this site also offers tips on steps that you should take.

OSHA also provides an extensive guide related to “[cold stress](#),” which occurs when skin temperature, and eventually internal body temperature, sinks to dangerous levels. This can lead to frostbite, permanent nerve damage and even death, so preventing cold stress and related conditions is extremely important.

This site also has a printable [Cold Stress Quick Card](#); if you are required to work outside or travel much during winter, it is a good idea to print this card and carry it in your wallet or glove compartment.

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## Winter Storms



While cold temperatures present continual danger throughout the months of winter, an acute danger arises during snowstorms/winter storms. The higher wind speeds, increased snowfall, and potential for icy surfaces that accompany these storms add additional danger to already hazardous situations. This is especially true for those who work in industries where they are exposed to the elements. For example, last year we blogged about an industrial accident that occurred when a worker was severely injured while clearing ice from some equipment.

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*“With the winter season here, it is very important for workers and employers to be aware of the hazards associated with working outside or when driving. Employers need to take steps to reduce the risk of injuries and make sure workers have proper protective equipment to stay safe while working.”*

View this previous post on winter storms for more information on this topic.

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## **Protect Yourself From The Cold**

This [video from CBSPhilly](#) discusses the recent series of storms and bitter cold that has enveloped Philadelphia. The video also contains an interview with a doctor regarding how the body reacts to such cold weather, and provides tips for staying safe in the extreme cold.

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