



# RISK REMINDER

Mid-West Truckers Risk Management Association

Mid-West Truckers Risk Management Association

February 2021

## COLD STRESS

Workers who are exposed to extreme cold or work in cold environments may be at risk of cold stress. Extreme cold weather is a dangerous situation that can bring on health emergencies in susceptible people, such as outdoor workers and those who work in an area that is poorly insulated or without heat. These weather-related conditions may lead to serious health problems, such as:

**Hypothermia:** When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. A body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well.

**Early Symptoms:**

- Shivering
- Fatigue
- Loss of coordination
- Confusion and disorientation
- Slurred Speech

**Late Symptoms:**

- No shivering
- Blue skin
- Dilated pupils
- Slowed pulse and breathing
- Loss of consciousness

**First Aid:**

- Move to a warm shelter
- Remove wet clothing
- Warm the body with blankets, towels, sheets, etc.

**Frostbite:** An injury to the body that is caused by freezing. Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in the affected areas. It most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes; it can lead to amputation.

**Symptoms:**

- Reduced blood flow to hands and feet (fingers or toes can freeze)
- Numbness
- Tingling or stinging
- Aching
- Bluish or pail, waxy skin

**First Aid:**

- Get into a warm room as soon as possible
- Immerse affected area in warm-not hot-water
- Do not rub or massage affected area, which would cause more damage
- Warm the affected area using body heat; for example- armpit

**Trench Foot:** a non-freezing injury of the feet resulting from prolonged exposure to wet and cold conditions. Skin tissue begins to die because of lack of oxygen and nutrients and due to the buildup of toxic products:

**Symptoms:**

- Reddening of the skin
- Numbness
- Leg cramps
- Swelling
- Tingling pain
- Blisters or ulcers
- Bleeding under the skin

**First Aid:**

- Remove shoes/boots and wet socks.
- Dry their feet.
- Avoid walking on feet, as this may cause tissue damage.

**Questions:**

1. Shivering is an early symptom of which cold stress? \_\_\_\_\_
2. **True or False:** Hot water should be used for frostbite. \_\_\_\_\_

*This report, and any attachments, is based upon conditions and practices observed and information supplied by management personnel (or their representative) and/or the employee(s) at the time of the visit. This report contains information intended for insurance purposes only, and was prepared solely for that purpose. CCMSI assumes no responsibility for the detection, identification, communication, mitigation, or elimination of any unsafe condition or practice associated with the operations of or safety program of any client. Inspections and recommendations made by CCMSI are advisory and designed to assist clients in the establishment and maintenance of their own safety activities. The client shall remain fully responsible for the implementation and operation of its own safety programs and for the detection and elimination of any unsafe conditions or practices. CCMSI assumes no responsibility for management or control of these activities, or for the correction of the conditions pointed out herein. CCMSI assumes no responsibility for any injury sustained by an employee of the client. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution of this information is prohibited.*

**For more information contact your Loss Prevention Consultant at 800-252-5059.**