

IMPORTANT POINTS

- When you arrive on a job site to which you were assigned by LaborTek and can't find the contact that you are supposed to meet, we ask that you stay around and give us a call. Do not leave the premises before giving us a call.
- As much as it's important for time cards to be handed in on time, it's as important that they are properly filled-in and signed by your supervisor at work. You have in your employment kit a copy of a time card as it should be filled-in. Please refer to this example. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to ask either Jean Beauchamp or Nathalie Ferguson.

Have a safe and healthy month of January

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What is Hypothermia and Frostbite

Hypothermia occurs when the core temperature of your body falls below the normal level. If your body becomes too cold, your vital organs cease to function properly. If unrecognized and untreated in the early stages, hypothermia can eventually result in death.

Symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, chattering teeth, confusion, slurred speech, lack of coordination and eventually unconsciousness.

Frostbite is when your flesh freezes. It can occur even without the symptoms of hypothermia. Your extremities, such as your ears, feet, fingers and cheeks, are prone to frostbite in extremely cold weather.

Symptoms of frostbite are quite different from hypothermia. The exposed skin will first appear reddish, and then a greyish-white color. You probably seen on TV where mountain climbers have been rescued and their noses or fingers are jet black. This is because the skin has in essence died.

Both hypothermia and frostbite can progress to a medical emergency and therefore require immediate first-aid treatment.

Prevention of Hypothermia and Frostbite

The easiest way to prevent hypothermia or frostbite is to dress for the conditions and to be aware of how your body is coping with the cold. Try these suggestions for cold weather work:

Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothing. Then you can adjust by removing or adding a layer or two. Even simple activities such as frequently getting in and out of a vehicle can create a challenge for maintaining a comfortable body temperature.

To stay dry as you work, dress so that the layer next to your skin can "wick" the moisture away. Wet clothing can lose up to 90% of its insulation value and drain your body heat away.

Make sure your hands and head are covered at all times to minimize your heat loss. Wear an approved cold weather liner under your hard hat for added warmth.

In severe weather conditions, particularly cold winds, you may need to cover your face with a scarf or woolen mask.

Extra socks, gloves, and boot liners are easy to stash in a pocket or pack. Then if yours get wet, you can easily change for a quick warm-up.

Besides providing warmth for your hands, gloves must protect you against your specific job hazards - for instance, cuts, punctures, burns, chemicals or electricity.

Your safety footwear should keep your feet warm and dry. Extra boot liners and warm winter socks will help.

Dress for the weather and your outside work will be more comfortable. But, remember, it is sometimes difficult for you recognize the symptoms of frostbite or hypothermia in yourself. Make sure you and your companions keep a close watch on each other for the warning signs.