

Winter Weather Safety Hazards

Toolbox Talks

Discuss with crews on _____

The winter season brings **cold temperatures** and severe weather conditions that create many hazards for individuals working in areas that experience these conditions. Even if you work indoors, winter weather still poses many hazards for you, such as **driving into work in bad weather** or walking through an icy parking lot to get to your building. It is important to recognize and address the hazards the winter season brings with it.

Winter Driving Crash Statistics

One of the main issues winter poses in many parts of the country is poor driving conditions. Nearly 30% of collisions in Canada happen on wet, snow covered or icy roads. One third of collisions occur between November and February. The hazards created by winter weather make it hard for even the most experienced drivers to operate a vehicle safely.

Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls are one of the leading causes of injuries and fatalities in the workplace. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety more than 42,000 workers are injured annually due to falls. Statistics show the majority (66%) are due to slips and trips on the same level. Snow, sleet, and ice greatly increase the chances for slip, trip, and fall incidents to occur.

Winter Safety Tips

When driving:

- Monitor weather for any incoming snowstorms or icy conditions and plan your travel around those conditions. Do not put yourself in a situation where you are stuck on a roadside.
- Be a defensive driver. Stay clear of other drivers and maintain a safe distance in case you need to brake or turn to avoid an accident.
- Slow down. Winter weather conditions make it necessary to reduce your speed. Reducing your speed will give you more time to react as well as help to avoid losing control of your vehicle.

When walking on icy/ snowy surfaces:

- Remove trip hazards before snow or ice conditions are present. This eliminates someone tripping over a buried object after the snow or ice hits.
- Shovel and salt parking lots and walkways prior to work beginning in that area. Prep walkways before workers get on-site in the morning.

- Take your time when walking across slippery surfaces. Taking smaller steps lessens your chances of losing your balance.
- Have the proper footwear on for the weather. Wear shoes with solid tread on the soles.
- When working on construction sites you may be required to wear cleats due to reoccurring incidents involving slippery conditions.

Discussion point:

-What other hazards does winter create?

-What are some best practices to address these hazards?