

Safetyline

Apartment Association of Michigan

Benefits

Member

Membership in the Apartment Association carries benefits beyond savings on Work Comp insurance. Members join a network of their peers; thus, gaining access to information sharing and the tools needed for effective loss control.

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Apartment Association of Michigan

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Jack Frost: Take Caution If He Starts Nipping At Your Nose

Editor's Note: We encourage all of our members to use this information as a starting point for effective safety communication. Members should add to it based on their safety needs and work environments.

Michigan winters present an uncertain challenge for maintenance workers and grounds crews. There is no way of predicting if they will be mild and relatively dry, or blustery and wet.

Exposure to wet and cold, even at temperatures above freezing, can cause medical problems ranging from frostnip to hypothermia.

The good news is that, with preplanning, the effects of exposure are easily

preventable. Knowledge of these conditions will help maintenance supervisors establish effective safety standards and programs.

The Levels of Exposure

•**Frostnip** is a common and reversible result of exposure to the cold. Persons suffering from frostnip can easily rewarm cold fingers, toes or nose by gently rubbing these areas briskly.

•**Frostbite**, however, is a more serious condition caused by long exposure to the cold. This, if left untreated, may result in the actual freezing of an extremity, digit or nose. Do not attempt to rewarm a frostbitten extremity by rubbing it. Re-warming must be done gradually.

•**Hypothermia** is defined as an internal body temperature less than 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Shivering
- Slurred speech
- Abnormally slow breathing
- Cold, pale skin
- Loss of coordination
- Fatigue, lethargy or apathy

Symptoms usually develop slowly. Someone with hypothermia typically experiences gradual loss of mental acuity and physical ability, and so may be unaware of the need for emergency medical treatment. See inside for more important seasonal safety tips.

Be Well Informed; The Three Stages of Hypothermia

Mild- (body temp 90-95 degrees) earliest stages of hypothermia characterized by slurred speech or difficulty in

speaking, cool skin and excessive shivering.

Moderate- (85-90 degrees) as body temperature drops victims become stuporous. Shivering will stop at about 89.0 degrees and will be replaced

with muscular rigidity. Followed shortly by the loss of voluntary movement.

Severe- (less than 78 degrees) victims become unresponsive with irregular heartbeat and cardiac arrest.

WORKING IN COLD WEATHER

General Guidelines

Cold weather creates slipping hazards as ice forms on ladders, walkways and scaffolds. Remove ice and snow from those areas before allowing access by workers.

Most work takes longer in cold weather, allow extra time to complete tasks.

Make a point to discuss how work will proceed through periods of extreme cold and other winter weather conditions with your crew as you assign them their work.

Summary

Dress in several layers.

Protect your feet, hands and head as they are affected first and most.

Take breaks in warmer areas.

Remove ice and snow from walkways, steps, ladders and scaffolds.

Allow sufficient time to complete tasks.

Know What You Are Dealing With

Winter doesn't always mean snow. Precipitation can be varied, thus, calling for different plans of attack—ranging from de-icing to full-blown snow clearance. Make sure you have a plan in place for all the weather possibilities winter might bring.

Freezing Rain. Super cooled droplets of liquid precipitation falling on a surface whose temperature is below or slightly above freezing, resulting in a hard, slick, generally thick coating of ice commonly called a glaze or clear ice.

Frost. Ice crystals in the form of scales, needles, feathers or fans deposited on the surfaces cooled by radiation or other process. The deposits may be composed of frozen dots of dew.

Light Snow. Snow falling at the rate of less than 1 inch per hour: visibility is not affected adversely.

Moderate or Heavy Snow. Snow falling a rate of 1 inch per hour or greater; visibility may be reduced.

Sleet or ice Pellets. A frozen mixture of rain and snow that had been partially melted by falling through a layer of the atmosphere having a temperature above freezing.



Wear several layers of clothing, including a waterproof and/or wind proof outermost layer. Also, always wear a hat and gloves. Our head is a great source of heat loss for our body (30-40 percent). Ears and fingertips as well as noses are extremely susceptible to frostnip and frostbite.

SAFETY MEETING

FOR THE APARTMENT INDUSTRY

COMPANY NAME _____ JOB NAME _____ DATE _____

PROTECT AGAINST WINTERTIME EXPOSURE

Awareness Is Key In Preventing And Dealing With Frostnip, Frostbite
and Hypothermia.

- Limit your exposure. If you must go out do so during mid day when the sun is at its strongest and the temperature at its highest.
- Hypothermia occurs when your body's control mechanisms fail to maintain a normal body temperature.
- Signs and symptoms that may develop include gradual loss of mental and physical abilities. Severe hypothermia can lead to death.

SPECIAL TOPICS FOR THIS PROJECT _____

EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS _____

Meeting attended by:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Supervisor's Signature _____

Fax this page to the head of your safety team

MEMBER BENEFIT

Loss control seminars designed to enhance existing safety programs, bring members new information for their changing industry and heighten their safety awareness.

IN 2006 WE BROUGHT OUR MEMBERS INFORMATION ABOUT:

- Return-to work programs
- Mold and its abatement
- Protecting your property against meth labs.

Company Name _____

Topics You Would Like To See Offered At Future Seminars:

Fax this page back to Brenda Boomer, 810-629-7738 or contact her at bboomer@spsinsurance.com to provide seminar suggestions.



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