



Ice & Snow

Winter is here, and with it comes the threat of ice and snow. You're probably used to maneuvering around the elements and managing despite the weather, however, during particularly nasty weather, it's even more important that you pay attention and focus on your personal safety. Don't be careless. During the winter months, always remember to keep your eyes on the path.

Picture this: it's an early winter morning and you get up, shower, dress for the job, and eat some breakfast. The crisp air gets you as you open the outside door and step onto the porch. Too late you notice that your porch steps are icy and your feet slip and go flying into the air. Let's say that you're lucky and you just land on your behind with no broken bones. But if it's not your lucky day, even a minor fall can keep you down for days or weeks. Do what you can to avoid the fall in the first place. Use caution and expect frost and ice in the winter.

Of course, the hazards and obstacles created by ice and snow don't end there on your porch. Your caution should play a big role in how you go about your morning commute and you should continue to keep your mind on safety when you arrive at the jobsite. Look around. Did anyone clear a path from the parking lot to the entrance? If not, you could suffer another fall. As you head to your work area, consider your path. Is it covered in ice or snow? Will you be climbing any steps? Do your tasks today involve climbing a ladder? If so, are the rungs free of ice? Do you have to go up on the iron to hang steel? It would be safer if you could wait for the morning sun to melt the ice before you go up there. Some tasks may need to be postponed until the weather changes or the temperature rises above freezing.

For sure, you'll have to make your way around the jobsite. You may need to go to the superintendent's trailer, the lunchroom, the tool room, or the port-a-potty. Do you have safe access to these areas? Every project should have a snow and ice removal plan in place. Someone should be assigned to clear and sand or salt walkways and sidewalks. Someone should be in charge of checking the entire jobsite throughout the day to remove any fresh buildup of snow or ice.

You can prevent just about any accident with training, a little observation, precaution, and some planning. Think about some of the obvious hazards: Walk—don't run—on ice or snow. When you have to stand on a slippery surface, take the time to plant your feet to create a stable foundation. When climbing stairs, hold on to the railings. Keep your mind on what you're doing.



Working in the cold presents challenges in every task you take on; beware of slippery surfaces, bulky clothing, frostbite, and hypothermia. You have a responsibility to work safely. Stay focused, pay attention, stay warm, and be safe.

SAFETY REMINDER

The line between a near-miss and fatality can be razor-thin! One moment of inattention can lead to a lifetime of pain or regret. Stay Alert!