

Cold Stress & Winter Work

TRADE: GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

LEADER GUIDE: 8-12 MINUTES

USE WHAT FITS TODAY

LEADER NOTE

Do not read this sheet word-for-word. Pick the sections that match today's task, point to the actual equipment/work area, and get the crew to answer the questions out loud.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Use this leader guide before cold stress & winter work work to review the real setup, the controls that need to be in place, and the conditions that should stop the task. Work capacity changes with heat, cold, vibration, long shifts and basic sanitation. These conditions can reduce judgment and coordination before a worker realizes they are in trouble. Controls should be planned into the shift instead of waiting for symptoms.

A SCENARIO TO DISCUSS

The crew planned Cold Stress & Winter Work for a shorter, easier period, but production delays extend the task and increase the physical or environmental load. What rest, hydration, warming/cooling, rotation, or scheduling controls need to change?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

- Review environmental conditions, expected duration/workload and worker acclimatization/fitness for the task.
- Stage water, rest/warming/shade and other controls where workers can actually use them.
- Agree on symptoms and the response plan before the shift makes judgment or coordination worse.
- Layer clothing so sweat can escape while wind and moisture are controlled; replace wet clothing promptly.
- Provide warm-up breaks and a heated or sheltered recovery area when conditions warrant it.

SAFE WORK SEQUENCE / CONTROLS

- Layer clothing so sweat can escape while wind and moisture are controlled; replace wet clothing promptly.
- Provide warm-up breaks and a heated or sheltered recovery area when conditions warrant it.
- Use a buddy system and act on shivering, loss of coordination, confusion, numbness or unusual fatigue early.
- Account for wind, wet surfaces, metal contact and reduced dexterity when planning tools, access and work duration.

QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD CHANGE THE JOB

1. What condition in today's heat, cold, sun, workload, shift length, vibration, or sanitation setup could reduce a worker's ability to work safely?
2. Where are the planned water, rest, shade/warming, rotation, or other recovery controls, and are they available now?
3. What symptom or change in coordination/behavior means the worker stops and gets help rather than trying to finish the task?

COMMON FAILURE POINTS

- Waiting for obvious symptoms before reducing exposure or workload.
- Skipping breaks/water/warming because production is behind.
- Ignoring reduced grip, balance, attention or reaction time caused by the condition.

STOP AND RESET IF...

- A worker shows symptoms, reports reduced control or cannot safely continue the task.
- Environmental conditions exceed the plan or the required breaks, water, shade/warming or exposure controls are unavailable.
- The task duration, workload or equipment vibration changes enough to invalidate the planned limits.

4. Has the duration or physical load changed enough since the plan was made that breaks, staffing, or the work method needs to change?
5. What rest, hydration, warming/cooling, rotation, or scheduling controls need to change?

MAKE IT REAL ON THE JOB

Point out water/rest/warming/shade controls and review the symptoms that mean a worker is done for the moment.

BEFORE YOU RELEASE THE CREW

Before the crew starts, everyone should be able to explain the hazard, point to the control being used today, and name the condition that would make the work stop.

ATTENDANCE & SIGN-OFF

Cold Stress & Winter Work

Project / Job:		Date:	
Talk leader:		Location:	

CREW ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing, attendees confirm they participated in this toolbox talk and had the opportunity to raise job-specific questions. Signatures do not replace required training, qualifications, permits or certifications.

#	Name	Company / Trade	Signature
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QUESTIONS / CONDITIONS / CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

END-OF-TALK CHECK

☐ Crew can point to the main hazard.	☐ Critical control is in place and usable.
☐ The responsible person/check is clear.	☐ Stop/re-brief conditions were discussed.