When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body’s stored energy. This could result in cold related illnesses and injuries that lead to permanent tissue damage and possibly death.

COMMON COLD RELATED ILLNESSES

Hypothermia
- Occurs when the body cannot maintain a normal core temperature of 98.6 F to 99.9 F.
  Warning signs:
  - Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech and drowsiness.
  - Late symptoms – No shivering, blue skin, dilated pupils, slowed pulse, loss of consciousness.

Frost Bite
- An injury to the body that is caused by freezing.
  Warning Signs:
  - Reduced blood flow to hand and feet, numbness, tingling, aching waxy skin, redness and may blister.

Trench Foot
- An injury of the feet resulting from prolonged exposure to wet and cold conditions.
  Warning Signs:
  - Reddening of the skin, numbness, leg cramps, tingling, bleeding under the skin, swelling and gangrene.

Chilblains
- An injury that typically occurs to the cheeks, ears, fingers and toes. This is due to repeated exposure of skin to temperatures just above freezing to as high as 60 degrees F.
  Warning Signs
  - Redness, itching, possible blistering, inflammation and possible ulceration in severe cases.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING COLD TEMPERATURE RELATED INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

- Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that lead to potential cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses/injuries and what to do to help the worker.
- Select and wear the proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions. Layer loose-fitting, insulated clothing, hats, coats, shoes and gloves.
- Wear the appropriate closed toed slip resistant shoes. Walk slowly and carefully on snowy and icy sidewalks.
- Be careful driving, entering and exiting your vehicle.
- Wipe your shoes on a floor mat after entering a building.
- Take frequent short breaks in warm dry shelters to allow body to warm up.
- Change out wet clothing as soon as possible.
- Use buddy system (work in pairs).
- Drink warm beverages. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Exercise caution while removing snow and ice. Particular attention should be applied to your physical condition and type of equipment used. Remember to always follow manufacture guidelines while using power equipment.
- Pay attention and use handrails.
- Avoid touching extremely cold metal surfaces with your bare hands.

TO REPORT A HAZARDOUS SITUATION OR INJURY CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:

- CALL CAMPUS POLICE AT 911 OR FROM A CELL PHONE (704) 687-2200 LIFE THREATENING INJURIES.
- CONTACT FACILITIES MANAGEMENT FOR HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS.
- If possible, move the worker to a warm environment.
- Remove wet clothing
- If possible, provide warm beverage avoiding alcohol and caffeine.

For more information, please see the

CDC Cold Stress Guide
And OSHA Cold Stress Card

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