

The Outdoor Cold Illness Prevention Program is designed to ensure that production employees receive adequate information relevant to the potential hazards of working outdoors in cold weather conditions.

Cold Stress

Cold stress can affect people working in cold or wet environments. This occurs when your internal body temperature drops, and the body is unable to warm itself. Workers with cold stress may show symptoms ranging from shivering, frostbite, to hypothermia, which can be fatal. The most important warning sign is feeling cold which indicates you are losing heat faster than your body can generate it.

Environmental risk factors for cold illness

Working conditions that create the possibility that cold illness could occur:

- Air temperature
- Wind speed
- Heat of the sun
- Workload severity and duration causing fatigue
- Ability to stay dry (sweating, proper layering of clothing)

Risk factors for cold illness

Factors such as an individual's age, degree of acclimatization, health, water consumption, alcohol consumption, caffeine consumption, and use of prescription medications that affect the body's water retention or other physiological responses to cold.

Risk Assessment

- On-site temperature measurements when at -7°C or lower (or wind chill equivalent)
- Face-to-face check in and monitoring of workers for signs and symptoms of cold illness
- Assign person(s) to monitor weather conditions, issue severe weather warnings, wind chill warnings and adjust crew schedules and locations as necessary.

Control Measures

- Heated warming shelters on site (buildings, tents).
- Work/rest schedule to allow for break from cold exposure, re-warming, and rest.
- Protective clothing with proper layering to provide insulation and to “wick” moisture away from the skin.
- Warm head covering, waterproof boots, and gloves or mittens.
- Waterproof outer layer for work in wet conditions.
- Stay hydrated. Limit the amount of coffee or tea.

Additional Control Measures for Rural and Wilderness Locations

When working on location in a rural or wilderness location, consider:

- Heated warming shelters (Tents, trailers, heated shuttle vans).
- Work/rest schedule to allow for break from cold exposure, regular warming, and rest.
- Additional protective clothing if working in extreme cold weather.
- Additional medical personnel – certified mountain safety team, water safety and rescue team, ice safety team
- Site-specific Emergency Response Plan to establish rescue, first aid, evacuation, and medical transport procedures
- Implement a weather monitoring plan to monitor weather conditions, issue severe weather warnings, wind chill warnings and adjust crew schedules and locations as necessary.

Pre-Planning

Pre-planning can reduce many of the potential dangers posed by inclement weather. The location manager, his/her department representative, production management, and production safety representative should develop an "action plan" when preparing to use locations that may present an inclement or severe weather hazard.

The action plan should designate a person who is responsible for monitoring potential inclement weather by commercial weather services, television and radio station news casts, or other available means.

The action plan should include a method for communication with cast and crew members in the event of inclement or severe weather. The communication methods should reflect the conditions and circumstances at the scene. Other elements to include should be site specific procedures which include methods and routes of evacuation, meeting areas, a means of establishing a head count for cast and crew members and procedures for equipment shut-down, stowage and/or removal. If there is the possibility of inclement or severe weather, a "safety meeting" shall be held to review and communicate the elements of the action plan.

Responsibilities

Production Safety Representative

The Production Safety Representative will introduce this Program to production, including any key department heads (construction, special effects, locations, etc.), and will explain best practices for implementation. In some cases the Studio may designate an alternate safety professional to assist production. Responsibilities include:

- Providing an up-to-date written Program to production.
- Working jointly with affected departments, as needed, in establishing reasonable guidelines to protect employees from cold illness.
- Monitoring the program as needed and providing advice on specific program concerns.
- Providing assistance in the investigation of cold illnesses, as necessary.
- Making training resources available to assist in prevention of cold illness, and to comply with applicable cold illness regulations.

Department Heads / Supervisors (Management / Department Heads)

Management will oversee and coordinate the responsibilities of this cold illness program. Supporting and enforcing safety guidelines for the prevention of cold illness.

- Attending cold illness safety training and following cold safety procedures.
- Providing water and access to heated areas to employees as required by this program.
- Responding to and evaluating symptoms of cold illness.

Employees

Employee responsibilities include:

- Understanding and complying with this program
- Attending cold illness safety training and following cold illness safety procedures
- Seeking assistance with cold illness safety when needed
- Immediately, or as soon as practical, reporting cold related illness to their appropriate foreman or supervisor
- Reviewing the call sheet and its attachments
- Attending all daily safety meetings

Communication

Communication of cold illness prevention information to employees is an important part of the program. In addition to training, certain elements in this program require specific employee notifications.

Examples of communication include, but are not limited to, verbal announcements, electronic communication, use of production “call sheets,” etc.

Training

Employees and supervisors who are assigned to outdoor work shall receive training in elements of this Outdoor Cold Illness Prevention Program.

Supervisor Training

Prior to assignment to supervision of employees working in the cold, training on the following topics shall be provided:

- The procedures the supervisor is to follow to implement the applicable provisions of the Outdoor Cold Illness Prevention Program.
- The procedures the supervisor is to follow when an employee exhibits symptoms consistent with possible cold illness, including emergency response procedures.
- How to monitor weather reports and how to respond to high cold.
- All training elements listed for “Employee Training”

Employee Training

All employees shall receive cold illness prevention training prior to working outdoors. Training shall include:

- The environmental and personal risk factors for cold illness.
- Procedures for complying with the requirements of the regulation.
- The importance of acclimatization. The different types of cold illness and the common signs and symptoms of cold illness, the first being feeling cold and shivering.
- The importance to employees of immediately reporting to the employer, directly or through the employee's supervisor, symptoms or signs of cold illness in themselves, or in co-workers.
- Procedures for responding to symptoms of possible cold illness, including methods for summoning medical assistance.

Training should be documented following the guidelines in the Injury and Illness Prevention Program. Employees may have received prior training from another company or Studio. Before accepting documentation of previous training, a review for training documentation should be made.

NOTE: Regardless of prior training/documentation, all employees must receive site specific familiarization to the elements contained in this Outdoor Cold Illness Prevention Program.

Resources

CCOHS – Cold Environments-Working in the Cold

https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/cold_working.html

WSBC - Cold Stress

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/cold-stress>

OHS Regulation

[5.54, Exposure control plan](#)

[7.33–7.38, Cold exposure](#)

OHS Guideline

[G7.33-1 to 7.37-2, Cold Exposure](#)