



## Training notes from the woods & the classroom

February 2010

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# Working in Cold Weather

When the body is unable to warm itself, serious cold related illnesses and injuries may occur, and permanent tissue damage and death may result. Employees can lose dexterity as well as slip and fall as result of wearing additional clothing.

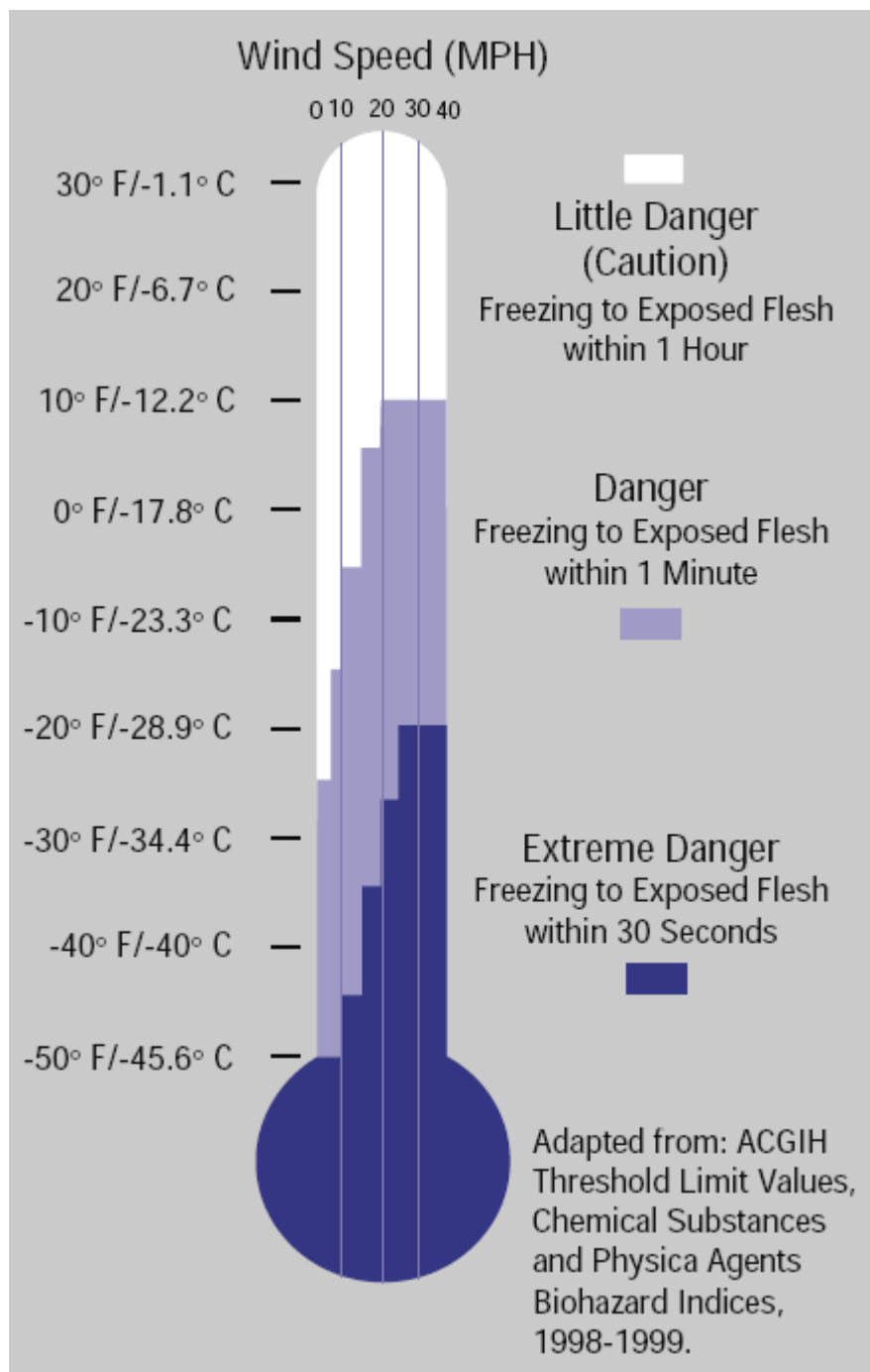


### **Workers Are At Most Risk When**

- They have predisposing health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and hypertension.
- They take certain medication (check with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacy and ask if any medicines you are taking affect you while working in cold environments).

### **How to Protect Workers**

- 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.
- Train the workforce about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Select proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions. Layer clothing to adjust to changing environmental temperatures. Wear a hat and gloves, in addition to underwear that will keep water away from the skin (polypropylene).
- Take frequent short breaks in warm dry shelters to allow the body to warm up.
- Perform work during the warmest part of the day.
- Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- Use the buddy system (work in pairs).
- Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks). Avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods like hot pasta dishes.



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