



# MONTHLY SAFETY NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER 2020

"SERVICING THE SHIPS THAT SERVE OUR COUNTRY"

## COLD WEATHER SAFETY

As we enter the WINTER months in Hampton Roads, working in the cold presents a different set of potential problems. How to dress for the weather, recognizing the signs of frostbite and hypothermia, and safe work practices for these situations. We will cover common types of COLD stress; dressing for COLD weather safety; and to be aware and plan ahead!

### COMMON TYPES OF COLD STRESS

What exactly is cold stress? Cold stress happens by driving down the skin temperature and internal temperatures. When the body is unable to warm itself, serious cold-related illnesses and injuries can occur and permanent tissue damage and/or death may result.

#### HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is a medical emergency that occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce heat, causing a dangerously low body temperature. Signs to look for:

- Normal body temperature (98.6°F) drops to 95°F or less
- Mild Symptoms: alert by shivering
- Moderate to Severe Symptoms: Shivering stops; confusion; slurred speech; heart rate/breathing slow; loss of consciousness



#### FROSTBITE

Frostbite is an injury to body tissues caused by exposure to extreme cold, typically affecting the nose, fingers, or toes

- Body tissues freeze, e.g., hands and feet. Can occur at temperatures above freezing, due to wind chill. May result in amputation.
- Symptoms: numbness, reddened skin develops gray/ white patches, feels firm/hard, and may blister.



#### TRENCH FOOT (also known as IMMERSION FOOT)

Trench foot a painful foot disorder resembling frostbite and resulting from prolonged exposure to cold and wet.

- Non-freezing injury to the foot, caused by lengthy exposure to wet and cold environments. Can occur at air temperature as high as 60°F, if feet are constantly wet
- Symptoms: redness, swelling, numbness, and blisters

## DRESSING FOR COLD WEATHER SAFETY

Dressing improperly, wet clothing/skin and exhaustion are all risk factors that can lead to cold stress. Wearing at least three layers of loose-fitting clothing provides better insulation: An inner layer of wool, silk or synthetic to keep moisture away from the body, a middle layer of wool or synthetic to provide insulation even when wet and an outer wind and rain protection layer that allows some ventilation to prevent overheating. Tight-fitting clothing has the opposite effect and can restrict blood flow to your extremities.

In addition, wearing a hat or hood can help keep your whole body warmer by reducing the amount of body heat that escapes from your head. A knit mask used will best serve to protect the face and mouth, if needed. Lastly, insulated and/or water-resistant gloves and boots to protect the hands and feet will ensure that you are covered from head-to-toe!



## BE AWARE, PLAN AHEAD

It's important to be aware of cold stress symptoms and to monitor yourself and co-workers. Here are a handful best-practice, winter workplace habits that you should adopt each cold season in order to protect yourself and your co-workers:

- Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that may be dangerous
- Encourage workers to wear proper clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions, including layers that can be adjusted to changing conditions
- Be sure workers in extreme conditions take a frequent short break in warm dry shelters to allow their bodies to warm up
- Try to schedule work for 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, when possible, so that one worker can recognize danger signs
- Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks) and avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, sodas or hot chocolate) or alcohol
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods such as hot pasta dishes

Remember, workers face increased risks when they take certain medications, are in poor physical condition or suffer from illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension or cardiovascular disease.



## October Employee of the Month JOSH WILBURN

Josh Wilburn has become a critical component to AIT's down river crew. He has become the go-to machinist for critical path work items. Recently, he has become certified in CP, PAI, Forklift Driving, and is one of the first AIT team members to get 009-114 Mold Abatement Certified. On top of being a huge impact on the waterfront, he helped wrap up the repairs in the AIT Pleasure Craft Division. On behalf of AIT, we would like to extend a big thank you for the job that you do!

## November Employee of the Month ELI ACEVEDO

Eli Acevedo's performance on the *Kearsarge* was critical to the success of the structural package, both in plant and down river. As he moved on to support the USS Cole (DDG-67) Eli once again displayed his ship fitting talents by removing an existing ladder platform, fabricating new, and installing the completed ladder onboard the Cole during a short availability. Once the Cole was completed and underway, Eli was called upon once more to support the USS Stout (DDG-55) – another demanding project. Unsurprisingly, Eli completed the removal and installation of support structure in one of Stout's fan rooms. His unrivaled reliability and determination on the deck plates resonates strongly with the team and AIT Marine appreciates the continued commitment and effort. On behalf of AIT, we would like to extend a big thank you for the job that you do!

