

WORKING IN WINTER

Protective clothing is needed for work at or below 4°C and should be chosen based on the temperature, weather conditions such as wind, rain and snow, the level and duration of activity and the job at hand.

Take into consideration the amount of heat and perspiration you might generate while working as well. If the work is fast paced or if the type and amount of clothing are not properly selected, excessive sweating may occur causing the clothing to become wet and the insulation value to decrease dramatically increasing the risk for cold-related injuries.

IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS:

- WINTER CLOTHING FOR WORKING OUTSIDE
- OPERATING MOBILE OR HEAVY EQUIPMENT
- OPERATING NEAR OTHER HEAVY EQUIPMENT



BC Forest Safety

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WINTER CLOTHING FOR WORKING OUTSIDE

Layering allows your body to adjust its temperature. By adding and/or removing items, your body can maintain an even comfort level as conditions and exertion levels change.

For maximum warmth in cold weather, wear three layers:

1. Base layer: Long underwear that will keep skin as dry as possible.
2. Middle layer: Fleece or a puffy jacket can help insulate body heat keeping it warm.
3. Outer layer: Rain gear will protect from wet conditions and help guard against wind.

To prevent extremities from exposure, cover up:

- **Hats:** Consider wool and synthetic beanies to keep your head warm. Also consider winter hats with insulation such as a fleece lining inside a shell material and ensure your head wear covers your ears. For face coverage, wear a balaclava.
- **Gloves:** Fleece gloves provide basic warmth. Insulated gloves with waterproof/ breathable shells are the best choice. Insulated mittens with a waterproof shell are a warmer option as they allow the hand and fingers to share body heat.
- **Boots:** Boots with thick, wool or thermal socks can provide warmth in cold weather. Winter boots will provide traction on snow or ice as well as insulation to keep your feet warm. In wet conditions, choose waterproof boots to keep your feet dry. Avoid cotton socks in cold or wet conditions, as they absorb and hold onto sweat and moisture.

OPERATING MOBILE OR HEAVY EQUIPMENT

Conduct proper maintenance checks. Check tires, oil and wiper fluid regularly and make sure you have the right windshield wipers for the weather conditions. Turn on the equipment and allow it to warm up. The machine's hydraulics and engine fluids can be affected by cold weather and serious damage can occur if the system is not warmed up.

- Be prepared for tough conditions. Snow, ice and heavy rains can reduce visibility and destabilize the ground affecting driving conditions and pedestrian areas.
- Take breaks. An important part of staying safe is knowing when you're tired and overexerting yourself.

Before entering the cab:

- Beware of frozen metal. Skin can easily stick to frozen metal and rip tissue off. Direct contact with frozen metal can also cause ice burn and even frostbite to exposed skin, especially if skin is sweaty or wet.
- Take care on steps and grip plates. Ice can build up in cold conditions, so take extra care climbing in or out of machines to avoid slips.

During operation:

- Expect poor traction. Under-inflated tires, icy patches and poor traction can affect heavy equipment.
- Go slow. Wheels and tracks are equally susceptible to slipping on ice or frozen ground. Go slower than normal to minimize sliding.
- Keep windows clear. Ice and/or condensation can reduce visibility. Stop work immediately if visibility becomes a problem and clear windows properly.

OPERATING NEAR OTHER HEAVY EQUIPMENT

- If your ears are covered you might not hear the heavy equipment. Maintain eye contact if your hearing is compromised with head coverings.
- Be sure to communicate regularly with other drivers and operators to ensure they are aware you are operating in/near the area.
- If you are an operator or driver, slow down to avoid causing flying debris such as rocks.

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