



# Cold Conditions Safety Policy

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## Cold Conditions Safety Policy

Workers who work in cold conditions have a higher than average risk of harm due to cold and or wet conditions. Hypothermia and frostbite are two major health hazards of extreme cold exposure. Increases in back injuries and other musculoskeletal injuries are also possible.

### ❖ Definitions

Cold stress – is the sum of environmental effects that overexposure to low temperatures can have on a person. These effects may range from discomfort through to physical harm, causing death.

Frostbite – is the condition in which localised damage is caused to skin and other tissues due to freezing. Area's furthest from the body's core and with high surface-area-to-volume ratios such as the fingers, toes, ears, nose, and cheeks are the most susceptible to frostbite. Inadequate blood circulation when the ambient temperature is below freezing point leads to frostbite. This can occur when the body is constricting circulation to extremities to preserve core temperature and fight hypothermia.

Hypothermia – A core body temperature below 33°C caused by overexposure to low temperature. Hypothermia can also occur at higher than zero temperatures (5°C) during periods of heavy precipitation or if submerged in cold water. If the condition is not recognised and treated, death can result.

Wind Chill – is the perceived decrease in air temperature felt by the body on exposed skin due to the combined effects of high winds and low temperatures. The wind chill temperature is what the temperature "feels like" to a person during cold weather as a result of the wind passing over the exposed skin. As the wind speed increases, heat is drawn from the body, lowering skin temperature and eventually the core body temperature.

### ❖ Objective

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with information for protecting themselves where cold work conditions may cause serious injuries/illnesses to occur. Every worker must follow the guidelines provided in this section.

### ❖ Scope

This policy covers all work outdoors in winter conditions, inside freezers or at altitude and therefore may be exposed to cold conditions long enough to cause a risk to health.

### ❖ Policy

Xyz Company Proprietary Limited will endeavour to eliminate or reduce the number and severity of injuries caused by cold conditions by implementing procedures to identify and manage cold conditions hazards and the associated risks arising from those hazards.

In consultation with relevant persons, we will ensure all tasks with potential for cold stress are identified before work commences and throughout the work.

To reduce the risk of injury or illness from exposure to cold conditions, the organisation will:

- provide appropriate protective clothing;
- ensure all personal protective equipment (PPE) meet Australian and New Zealand Standards (AS/NZS);
- understand the warning signs and symptoms of cold stress conditions (frostbite and hypothermia);
- develop training and awareness programs to include:
  - health effects of exposure to cold conditions;
  - factors affecting apparent temperature (wind speed, wetness, temperature);
  - correct use of various cold protection measures;
  - early detection of the possible sign of cold stress; and
  - hazard and risk identification.

**Signature:**

*(To be signed by Director/CEO of Company)*

**Date:**