Monthly Safety Minute December 2015 Slips and Cold Weather

Surfaces are effected from water and cold temperatures causing a slip hazard. Proper foot wear is essential. Footwear with worn tread can contribute to a lack of friction.

-When navigating wet surfaces take shorter strides and walk with feet pointed out slightly ensure to make wide turns

-During inclement weather walk slowly and wear slip resistant foot wear. Dry wet shoes after entering a building. Wet shoes on dry floors are dangerous.

Prolonged exposure to freezing or cold temperatures may cause serious health problems such as trench foot, frostbite and hypothermia. Danger signs include uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, clumsy movements, fatigue and confused behavior. If these signs are observed, call for emergency help.

-Encourage workers to wear proper clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions, including layers that can be adjusted to changing conditions.

-Employees working outside should take a frequent short break in warm dry areas to allow their bodies to warm up.

-Try to schedule work for the warmest part of the day.

-Use the buddy system - work in pairs 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.