Tips for Working in a Cold Environment

Working in a cold environment inside or outside during the winter months can pose health risks such as dehydration, numbness, shivering, frostbite, trench foot, and hypothermia. To combat these risks, we can implement controls such as scheduling outside work for the warmest part of the day, utilizing barricades to block the wind, taking water breaks as needed in warm areas, and more.

Loose fitting clothing provides better ventilation to prevent overheating. Also, consider keeping a change of clothing available in case work clothes become wet. An inner layer of wool, silk or synthetic to wick moisture away from the body; a middle layer of wool or synthetic to provide insulation when wet; and an outer wind and rain protection layer that allows some ventilation.

Preventing frostbite

Frostbite is a condition that occurs when the skin, primarily exposed skin, such as fingers, toes, or face, is exposed to cold temperatures and becomes chronically cold. Symptoms include numbness, tingling, and loss of color, which can become permanent if not treated quickly. To prevent frostbite, we can implement controls such as wearing a hat or hood to prevent the loss of up to 40% of body heat. Insulated foot wear protects the feet. Brown's Law of the Cold, which states that the body loses heat at a rate of one calorie per square centimeter per degree Celsius, shows the importance of insulation. A middle layer of wool or synthetic to provide insulation when wet; and an outer wind and rain protection layer that allows some ventilation.

Health risks

In order to avoid health risks such as dehydration, numbness, shivering, frostbite, trench foot, and hypothermia, we can implement controls such as scheduling outside work for the warmest part of the day, utilizing barricades to block the wind, taking water breaks as needed in warm areas, and more.