



# Winter Safety Guide: Staying Prepared and Protected on the Job

A QUICK GUIDE



---

Winter brings unique challenges for those working in the skilled trades. As the cold season sets in, the focus shifts from getting the job done safely to managing the changing risks that winter brings. Snow, ice and freezing temperatures can quickly turn everyday tasks into serious hazards, affecting both safety and productivity.

This quick guide provides practical tips to help you recognize and manage the risks of winter conditions. With preparation, awareness and smart decision-making, you and your team can keep projects moving safely through the season and stay productive and confident — even in the toughest winter conditions.





## Working through winter? Follow these winter safety tips

At what temperature do construction workers stop working? For some, the answer is “never.” While it’s not unusual for companies in many parts of the country to put projects on hold during the winter months, there are skilled tradespeople and laborers who work outdoors all year long, even in places that get snow and ice.

If you’re one of the workers who doesn’t stop when the temperatures plummet, make sure to read up on winter construction safety topics so you’re prepared to stay warm and safe. [Here are a few winter safety tips for construction workers from PRST.](#)





## Review winter construction hazards

Don't assume you know how to avoid winter-related safety hazards and health issues like frostbite, hypothermia and trench foot. Before the snow starts to fall, ensure you and your team are up to date on winter construction safety and understand the specific risks for your jobsite conditions.

## Gear up properly for cold weather

Dress in several loose-fitting layers to stay warm throughout the day. When it comes to the layer next to your skin, skip cotton, which can absorb sweat, and go for a thin wool or silk layer. Top off your layered look with a warm waterproof jacket. Keep your feet warm and dry with insulated waterproof footwear.

If you wear a hard hat, make sure it's lined. When it comes to winter construction work gloves, choose a pair that not only protects your hands and keeps them warm, but also gives you a full range of motion. Pack extra items — just in case you get wet!



## Keep work surfaces clear and safe

Whenever possible, keep walkways and other work surfaces free of snow and ice to help prevent trips and falls. Practice safe walking techniques on snow and ice and slow down, taking short steps to stay steady.

## Stay safe on roofs and elevated surfaces

If at all possible, don't work on rooftops or other elevated surfaces after it snows. If that work is unavoidable, use fall protection equipment—and know how to use it correctly. Always use caution: clear snow and ice from ladders, overhead platforms and elevated workstations, ensure ladders are positioned securely and always keep your fall protection training in mind.



5

## Be mindful

Protecting yourself from falls on construction sites is important year-round, but in the winter months, you have an extra threat: Ice. Keep the three points of contact rule top of mind when mounting/dismounting ladders, platforms or equipment. Slow down your pace and take short steps where needed to stay safe.

## Buddy up to watch for cold-related illness

Pair up with a coworker on the jobsite. Not only can you help each other with the work, but pairing up also helps you to watch for early signs of issues like hypothermia and frostbite. Know the symptoms and check in on your buddy regularly, especially during extremely cold or icy conditions.

6



7

## Take warming breaks

You likely do this already, but it's particularly important in the cold to take short breaks throughout the day to warm up. Use a heated trailer, tent or another sheltered area to get out of cold, snowy conditions when you can.

## Warm up before or during shifts

Take the time to stretch and loosen your muscles before starting your shift. Warming up your body before work helps prevent strain and injuries in cold conditions. During the day, keep your body active whenever possible to stay warm and maintain flexibility.

8



9

## Move carefully on slippery surfaces

When you're on the jobsite, particularly if snow and ice are present, take short steps and slow your pace so you can react quickly if you hit a slippery spot. Another tip beyond wearing well-insulated boots: Choose footwear with good traction.

## Time work around the cold

If possible, do outdoor work in the afternoon when temps are at their highest. If the weather is extremely frigid, avoid prolonged exposure to reduce the risk of frostbite or other cold-related health issues.

10





# Winter weather ready: Your winter safety checklist

Winter weather can be unpredictable — but safety shouldn't be. From icy surfaces to freezing temperatures and limited daylight, cold conditions can impact productivity and increase risk on any job site. Taking a few proactive steps now can help keep everyone safe, warm and working efficiently all season long.

**Use this checklist to make sure your crews, sites and equipment are ready for winter.**

## SITE AND EQUIPMENT

YES

NO

Inspect tools and machinery before use to prevent cold-related damage

☐☐

Clear snow and ice from walkways, scaffolds and work areas

☐☐

Ensure proper lighting for darker mornings and evenings

☐☐

Apply salt, sand or non-slip mats where needed

☐☐

Store materials and equipment in dry, covered locations

☐☐

## WORKER SAFETY

YES

NO

Dress in insulated, moisture-wicking layers for warmth and comfort

☐☐

Wear high-visibility outerwear and weather protective gear

☐☐

Take regular breaks to warm up and stay hydrated

☐☐

Stay alert for signs of frostbite, hypothermia or fatigue

☐☐

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

YES

NO

Review and communicate emergency procedures

☐☐

Ensure first aid kits are stocked and accessible

☐☐

Mark emergency exits and clear all access paths

☐☐

Report hazards, icy areas or unsafe conditions immediately

☐☐

Have a plan for severe weather or site shutdowns

☐☐

---

Want to stay safe all winter long? Gear up for winter with more safety tips and resources at: [skilled.peopleready.com/worker-resources](https://skilled.peopleready.com/worker-resources)



## Facing winter confidently starts here

Staying safe and productive during winter isn't just about following procedures — it's about having the right people, the right skills and the right support to keep work moving despite cold, icy weather and shorter working days. At PRST, we understand the challenges winter brings. We connect skilled tradespeople with meaningful opportunities and help customers find qualified professionals who can keep projects on track safely and efficiently. When you partner with us, you're not just filling roles, you're building a safer, more reliable workforce that can tackle winter projects with confidence.

Don't let winter slow you down.

Visit: [skilled.peopleready.com/worker-resources](https://skilled.peopleready.com/worker-resources)

to learn more about how we can help you stay safe, efficient and winter-ready.