

Holiday and Cold Weather Safety

Overview

We all love the holiday season, the food, the decorations, the music, the joy! Well, rest assured this information will help you fully enjoy the season, knowing that everyone will be safe during all the festivities planned. Additionally, this TBT provides some tips for working in cold weather environments.

Electrical / Lights

Temporary holiday lights are cardinal this time of year, let's make sure they give joy, not terror.

- Check light packaging and use accordingly, either indoor or outdoor
- Do not overload outlets (think Christmas Vacation).
- Make sure electrical cords are not run under rugs or pinched by furniture.
- Give decorations a three foot clearance from heating sources and flames.
- Do not use tacks or nails to hold the lights in place.
- Do not remove lights by pulling or tugging.
- Turn off the lights when you go to bed or leave the house.
- Make sure there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections before hanging.

Trees

Many families enjoy a tree in their home over the season. Here are some tips to keep it from becoming kindling.

- Water regularly
- Do not block doorways
- Check the lights before hanging (see previous section)

Candles

Ah, the calming light of a candle. Just remember to keep them as decoration, not weapon.

- Do not use on trees or near plants
- Use non-flammable holders
- Keep away from decorations and wrapping paper
- Place where they cannot be knocked down or blown over

Food Preparation

Good food starts with good prep. Here are some tips to think about when cooking that bountiful meal:

- Wash your hands and anything that touches raw meat
- Do not defrost food at room temperature, use a microwave, cold water or refrigerator
- When deep frying a turkey, defrost it first, and wear the proper PPE to protect yourself in case of flare up
- Keep knives sharp – dull knives cause injuries
- Use a clean food thermometer to make sure the cooked food has a safe internal temp. Take into account that stuffed birds take longer to cook
- Avoid cleaning with sponges and wet cloths, use paper towels to reduce bacteria growth
- When reheating food bring it to at least 165 F to eliminate bacteria growth

Working in Cold Weather

- Prevent – Schedule outside jobs for days with warmer weather or the warmest part of the day.
- Watch out for cold stress symptoms.
- Wear the Right Clothes – Many layers of loose-fitting clothing will help insulate your body, but tight layers can restrict circulation which is bad for your extremities.
- Protect Extremities – Wear insulated boots, gloves, and a winter hat.
- Stay Dry - Moisture can increase the rate of heat loss from the body.

Signs of Cold Stress

- Hypothermia: Body temperature drops to 95F or less. Symptoms including: Shivering, confusion, slurred speech, heart rate/breathing slow, and loss of consciousness.
- Frostbite: Body tissues freeze, e.g., hands and feet. Can occur at temperatures above freezing, due to wind chill. May result in amputation. Symptoms: numbness, reddened skin

develops gray/white patches, feels firm/hard, and may blister.

- If either of these are experienced, immediately seek medical attention.

Slips / Trips / Fall on Snow and Ice

To prevent slips, trips, and falls, walking surfaces should be cleared of snow and ice, and other hazards, as quickly as possible. In addition, the following precautions will help reduce the likelihood of injuries:

- Wear proper footwear when walking on snow or ice is unavoidable. A pair of insulated and water resistant boots with good rubber treads is a must for walking during or after a winter storm.
- Take short steps and walk at a slower pace so you can react quickly to a change in traction.
- Be aware of wet/slick floors inside from snow being tracked-in.
- Because of shorter days and less light, ensure walkways and areas of work have adequate lighting.

Portable / Space Heaters

Use heating to avoid cold stress. If using a space heater, follow these requirements:

- Only use heaters indoors if necessary.
- Heaters must be Underwriters Listed or Factory Mutual approved.
- Heaters must have a tip-over automatic shut-down feature.
- Heaters must be at least 3 ft from combustible materials (e.g., cabinets, desks, trash cans, boxes).
- Heaters must be monitored when in use.
- Plug heaters directly into outlets, not into an extension cord or power strip.
- Heaters missing guards, control knobs, feet, etc. must be taken out of service.

Links

- [NSC Holiday Safety Tips](#)
- [OSHA Winter Safety](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BREWERY SAFETY, PLEASE VISIT THE MBAA BREWERY SAFETY WEBSITE AT:
<http://www.mbaa.com/brewresources/brewsafety>