

SAFETY CANADA

THE MEMBER NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADA SAFETY COUNCIL

JANUARY 2024

VOL. LXVIII NO. 1



FROSTY FOOTWORK: SAFELY NAVIGATING ICY SURFACES

To kick off the 68th volume of the *Safety Canada* newsletter, let's take time to tackle a slippery subject—literally. Navigating icy surfaces can be a precarious, slow, and focused endeavour, but that doesn't mean we need to be fearful! Read on for tips and tricks to avoid slips and falls, ensuring you stay upright and confident even when winter tries to trip you up.

Choose your footwear wisely. The first line of defense against icy slips is your shoes. Invest in winter-ready footwear with non-slip soles. Boots with good traction can make a significant difference in helping to maintain your balance on icy pathways.

Do the sideways shuffle. When faced with an icy stretch, walk like a penguin. Take shorter steps, shuffle your feet slightly, and keep your centre of gravity over your front leg. It may look silly, but this technique widens your base, improves stability, and significantly reduces the risk of taking an unexpected ice-induced tumble.

Provide your own traction. Before stepping out onto an icy surface, consider giving yourself an easier time in navigating it. Sprinkle salt, sand, or even kitty litter on the pathway to improve traction. These materials can provide the extra grip needed to keep you firmly on your feet.

Continued on page 3

.....

INSIDE

President's Perspective	2
Vehicle & Road Safety	4
Youth Safety	5
Workplace Safety	6
Home & Community Safety	7

.....

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE: MASTER THE ART OF HYPOTHERMIA DEFENCE

On behalf of the Canada Safety Council, happy New Year! Thank you for your continued support of our mission. I hope this newsletter finds you well, bundled up in your favorite winter gear as we navigate the chilly season together.

As we embrace the reality that winter is here to stay, I wanted to take a moment to address a crucial topic that often goes overlooked—the dangers of hypothermia in our workplace.

Winter brings its own set of challenges, and it's easy to underestimate the impact of cold temperatures on our health. Hypothermia is a real concern, especially for those of us who spend significant time outdoors as part of our duties.

Imagine this: the biting wind, the frosty air, and the relentless cold seeping into our bones. It's a scenario that, if not handled with care, can lead to serious consequences. Hypothermia occurs when our body loses heat faster than it can produce it, causing our core temperature to drop to dangerous levels.

Symptoms of hypothermia can be subtle—shivering, fatigue, and confusion. If ignored, they can escalate to more severe signs, including slurred speech, loss of coordination, and even unconsciousness. We owe it to ourselves and our coworkers to be vigilant about recognizing these signs early on.

Tackling hypothermia in the workplace is an important task. Here are a few steps we can take to keep our workers safe on the job.

Firstly, prioritize proper insulation. Invest in quality, cold-resistant clothing. In sub-zero weather, it's more than just a comfort—it's a necessity. Layers, hats, gloves, and insulated

footwear should be part of our daily armor against the cold.

Secondly, regular breaks in a warm environment can do wonders. A hot cup of coffee or tea not only provides a comforting break but also helps maintain our internal temperatures.

If you notice a colleague exhibiting signs of hypothermia or if you're feeling the chill a bit too much yourself, speak up. Clear and direct communication is the key to getting the help that is needed. Don't wait very long, either—

at 35 degrees below zero, hypothermia can set in after as little as 10 minutes.

Understanding the risks of hypothermia and how to prevent it is a step toward a safer workplace. Whether it's a quick chat during a team meeting or a friendly reminder posted in communal areas, knowledge is an important piece of the puzzle.

As we navigate the winter months, let's arm ourselves with the awareness and tools to keep hypothermia at bay. Our collective well-being is a responsibility we all share, and by addressing this issue head-on, we're ensuring a warmer, safer workplace for everyone.

Make Safety a Priority!



Gareth Jones
President and CEO





Frosty Footwork (Continued from page 1)

Take your time. Give yourself extra time to get from point A to point B, especially if you know you'll be traversing icy terrain. Slow and steady wins the race, and in this case, it also keeps you upright. Even in a situation where you're in a hurry and can't leave extra time, you'll get there more quickly by slowing down than by rushing and having to deal with the repercussions of a fall.

Use handrails. If handrails are available, use them to your advantage. Whether climbing stairs or navigating a slope, gripping onto a sturdy handrail can offer valuable support and balance.

Stay aware. Keep an eye on your surroundings. Watch for shaded areas where ice is likely to linger and be especially cautious when transitioning between different surfaces. Being aware of your environment can help you anticipate potential hazards and take steps to mitigate them before they become a problem.

Remember, it's better to arrive a little late and unscathed than to risk injury for the sake of speed. By incorporating these tips into your winter routine, you'll be well on your way to mastering the art of winter footwork. Stay safe, stay sure-footed, and enjoy the winter wonderland with confidence!

SNOWMOBILE OPERATORS COURSE

The Snowmobile Operators Course is a 7-to-8 hour training program operated by CSC certified instructors. Interested in learning more about this program? Looking to become an instructor? Check out the link below.

<https://canadasafetycouncil.org/snowmobile>





VEHICLE & ROAD SAFETY

DON'T WIPE OUT DURING A WHITEOUT

Winter transforms the world into a snowy spectacle, but for drivers facing whiteout conditions, the beauty can quickly become a challenge.

Navigating the roads during a blizzard requires time, patience, and an abundance of defensive driving skills.

If you can, of course, avoid driving in such conditions. Delay your trip. However, if unavoidable, here are some crucial driving safety tips to help you stay safe during a whiteout:

- 1. Reduce speed significantly.** In whiteout conditions, visibility can be reduced to almost nothing. Slow down well below the speed limit to give yourself more time to react to potential obstacles and changes in the road.
- 2. Increase following distance.** A greater following distance is crucial. Maintain a safe, large gap between you and the vehicle in front of you to allow for stopping room.
- 3. Use low beams and fog lights.** These can help improve visibility, a must in difficult conditions, without causing glare that can reflect off the falling snow.
- 4. Stay in your lane.** Stick to your lane,

avoiding unnecessary lane changes. Follow road markings and use them as a guide, as drifting snow can obscure the boundaries of the road.

- 5. Know when to pull over.** If conditions become unbearable, find a safe place to pull over and wait for the flurries to pass. Visibility is a key factor in safe driving, and pulling over is a responsible decision when the weather is severe.
- 6. Use GPS and roadside markers as reference points.** Utilize GPS navigation to stay on track, and pay attention to roadside markers, reflectors, or delineators. These can be crucial guides when visibility is low.
- 7. Remain calm and avoid sudden movements.** Keep a steady hand on the wheel and avoid sudden maneuvers. Abrupt actions can lead to loss of control in slippery conditions.

By adhering to these driving safety tips, you're not only safeguarding yourself but also contributing to a safer environment for everyone on the road.

Remember, patience and prudence are your allies in the face of winter's challenging conditions.

YOUTH SAFETY

WALKING SAFELY? S'NO JOKE!

As winter covers our surroundings in a bright layer of snow, as simple an act as walking requires more attention and care than is otherwise needed in the warmer months, especially where our youth are concerned.

- The season brings unique challenges for pedestrians, but with a mindful approach to safety, we can ensure that our young pedestrians navigate their winter walks with confidence and security at the top of their minds.

Layer Up for Visibility: In the winter, daylight hours are shorter, and visibility can be compromised by snowfall, overcast skies, and the darkness. Dressing youth in brightly colored clothing and adding reflective accessories, such as patches or strips, enhances their visibility, making them more noticeable to drivers.

- **Teach Safe Crossing Habits:** Instruct your children about safe crossing practices, emphasizing the importance of using designated crosswalks and waiting for traffic signals. During winter, drivers may also face visibility challenges, so it's of critical importance that children make eye contact with drivers before crossing.

Be Cautious at Intersections: Despite best intentions from oncoming motorists,

intersections can be particularly hazardous in winter due to icy patches and potential traffic congestion. Eye contact is only part of the equation, and children should be taught to cross only when it's safe to do so and oncoming traffic has come to a complete stop.

Mind the Snowbanks: Snowbanks lining sidewalks and streets can obstruct views for both pedestrians and drivers. Encourage young ones to approach intersections cautiously, ensuring they have a clear line of sight before crossing. Remind them that drivers may have difficulty seeing them if they emerge suddenly from behind a snowbank.

Plan the Route: Encourage youth to plan their routes in advance, favoring well-lit and well-traveled pathways. Avoiding secluded or poorly lit areas minimizes risks associated with reduced visibility.

Empowering our youth with knowledge and fostering a culture of pedestrian safety during winter ensures that their walks stay free from unnecessary hazards.

Emphasizing visibility, safe crossing habits, and mindful routing helps us all contribute to a winter landscape in which young pedestrians can walk around in safety with confidence and ease.

YOUTH SAFETY TRAINING

Safety training for our youth remains important in building their confidence and life skills. We offer programs for youth to build their skills, including Babysitter training, Home Alone training, and more!

Contact us at csc@safety-council.org for more information.



WORKPLACE SAFETY

PRECAUTION IS INFECTIOUS

As winter descends upon us, the risk of infectious diseases tends to rise, posing a significant challenge for workplaces aiming to maintain a healthy and productive environment.

Cold weather, confined indoor spaces, and seasonal illnesses can contribute to the rapid spread of infections. However, with thoughtful planning and proactive measures, employers and employees alike can play a crucial role in minimizing the impact of infectious diseases in the workplace.

Promote good hygiene practices. For example, encourage employees to wash their hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Provide hand sanitizers throughout the workplace, especially in high-traffic areas, to facilitate easy access to hand hygiene.

Educate employees on respiratory etiquette. Airborne viruses, such as those responsible for the common cold and flu, can spread through respiratory droplets. Encourage employees to practice respiratory etiquette by covering their mouths and noses with tissues or elbows when coughing or sneezing. Proper disposal of used tissues and immediate handwashing can significantly reduce the risk of transmission.

Provide flu vaccinations. Offering flu vaccinations to employees can be a highly effective strategy to reduce the incidence and severity of seasonal influenza. Arrange for on-site vaccination clinics or provide information about local vaccination centers to encourage employees to get vaccinated.

Implement flexible work arrangements. Consider implementing flexible work arrangements. Remote work options or adjusted schedules can allow unwell employees to recover at home without compromising productivity. This not only protects the health of the individual but also prevents the spread of infectious diseases to colleagues.

Maintain clean and sanitary workspaces. Regular cleaning and disinfection of commonly touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches, and shared equipment, can help prevent the spread of germs. Provide employees with sanitizing wipes to encourage them to clean their individual workspaces regularly.

In winter, when infectious diseases are more prevalent, maintaining a healthy workplace requires a collaborative effort from employers and employees. Stay smart and stay safe!

Looking Ahead

The winter months are typically busy behind-the-scenes months for the Canada Safety Council, as we plan our activities for the upcoming year.

Don't worry, though, you'll still be seeing plenty of us! The winter months also offer plenty of opportunity for safety-related discussions, meaning you'll be able to find us on our social media channels and news outlets, discussing the providing our researched and considered thoughts on major safety issues of the day.

On the road safety side of things, keep an eye out for our re-vamped Professional Driver Improvement Course! The updated program features brand-new modules, visuals and a section on Hours of Service. Look for it to launch early in 2024.

Lastly, looking ahead at project development, we're hard at work on a new safety course designed specifically for school bus drivers. Stay tuned for more information!

HOME & COMMUNITY SAFETY

READ THE INSTRUCTIONS !

'Tis the season of giving, and as we exchange tokens of love and joy, it's essential to prioritize the safety of our loved ones.

Now that the glittering paper and bows have been ripped open and cast aside, potential hazards exist that, with a little mindfulness, can easily be addressed.

Take a moment before using the gift to delve into the instructions and warnings accompanying it. Whether it's a high-tech gadget, a kitchen appliance, or a child's toy, understanding how to properly operate and care for the item is crucial.

Instructions often include essential safety information, including recommended age range and specific usage guidelines for electronics. These details are specifically included to keep users safe. Ignoring them may compromise both the functionality of the gift and your health and well-being.

Additionally, these instructions can feature assembly instructions. Improper setup and install can create problems both in the immediate and distant future. Reviewing the proper protocols will reduce the risks of undesirable outcomes due to instability.

Installation instructions are especially crucial where large objects are concerned. Furniture, televisions, exercise equipment and other bulky items often include information on how to anchor and secure them from toppling over.

It really can't be overstated — stability in the installation process dramatically reduces the odds of an item falling and crushing anyone passing by.

There isn't much more tempting than the allure of playing with a new gift, but taking a moment to first familiarize yourself with its safety precautions will ensure you can do so safely.



Follow us on LinkedIn:
[linkedin.com/company/canada-safety-council/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/canada-safety-council/)



Follow us on Instagram:
[@canadasafetycouncil](https://www.instagram.com/canadasafetycouncil)



Like us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/Canada.Safety



Follow us on Twitter:
[@CanadaSafetyCSC](https://twitter.com/CanadaSafetyCSC)

Safety Canada is the member newsletter of the Canada Safety Council, an independent, national, not-for-profit safety organization. While strenuous efforts are made to ensure the content represents the best current research and opinions, no guarantee, warranty or representation is made by CSC as to the absolute correctness or sufficiency of all information, and CSC assumes no responsibility therewith. Articles may be printed with credit, except those copyrighted to other organizations.

ISSN: 0048-8968

Canada Safety Council

1020 Thomas Spratt Place, Ottawa, ON K1G 5L5

Tel.: 613-739-1535 Fax: 613-739-1566

President: Gareth Jones

Editor: Lewis Smith (ext. 228)

Website: www.canadasafetycouncil.org

Charitable BN: 11882 8565 RR 0001

SAFETY CANADA

