



Beware of Spring Hazards

When you think of spring, blizzards don't usually come to mind. However, spring is a time for turbulent weather in many parts of the country, and blizzards can be a part of those weather patterns. Workers in construction, commercial fishing, maritime and agriculture are among those who need to take precautions.

OSHA offers a Cold Stress Card on its Website, www.osha.gov, which remind workers to take necessary precautions. Some of OSHA's tips include:

- Recognize environmental and workplace conditions that may be dangerous.
- Make sure the employer has trained you about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Wear proper clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions.
- Use the buddy system - work in pairs so that one worker can recognize danger signs.
- Remember, you face increased risks when you take certain medications, are in poor physical condition, or suffer from illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension or cardiovascular disease.

Another downside to spring is hail and thunderstorms. The National Weather Service offers tips to stay safe during severe weather.

If caught outdoors:

- Attempt to seek shelter in a vehicle or building. If no structure is available, stay as low to the ground as possible.
- Get as small as you can by crouching on the ground.
- Remember to avoid tall structures such as towers, tall trees, fences, and telephone or power lines.
- Stay away from all types of bodies of water.
- If you feel your hair stand on end, lightning is about to strike. Drop to your knees, bend forward and put your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.

If stuck in a vehicle:

- Find a safe place on the side of the road and pull over. Beware of trees that could blow over onto the car.
- Use emergency flashers, especially during heavier rains.
- Remain in the car.
- Watch for possible flash flooding. Should you notice the beginnings of flooding, abandon your vehicle, and seek higher ground immediately.
- Avoid flooded roadways.

*Copyright 2004 * National Safety Council * All Rights Reserved. Reviewed 5/05.*