TOOLBOX SAFETY TRAINING

ESC SAFETY CONSULTANTS

Company _____ Location _____ Date _____

Vol 29 - No 46 DRESSING FOR COLD WEATHER

After working in the summer heat, you might think that the winter cold would be a relief. However, more problems occur due to working in the elements during winter than during summer. Humans are not as equipped to handle heat loss as they are to handle heat gain. Many workers every year incur lost work hours due to cold-related injuries.

What puts you at risk? Simply being male is one surprising risk factor. Men are more susceptible to cold related stresses than women. Having a cold or certain diseases also puts you at risk. People with diabetes, heart, vascular or thyroid problems should pay close attention to their health while working in the cold. In cold temperatures, about 60% of your body fuel is used to heat your body. Staying out in the frigid weather for long periods of time can leave you tired and cold - two dangerous ingredients for cold related injuries and illnesses. It is important to take precautions during cold months. Prevention is the best medicine.

Dressing properly in the cold is overlooked by a lot of employees. Dressing in layers is one of the best ways to prevent cold from affecting you. It is recommended that you start with an innermost layer of cotton that breathes, a middle layer of down or wool to absorb sweat, and an outer layer to cut the wind. Because your head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of your body, wear a turtle neck and wear either a thermal quilted or fleece liner that will help protect your ears and nose. Your cheeks, ears and nose are most prone to frostbite so keep them covered. Always wear gloves. Cold hands and fingers decrease your dexterity making it hard to grasp tools properly which could cause an injury.

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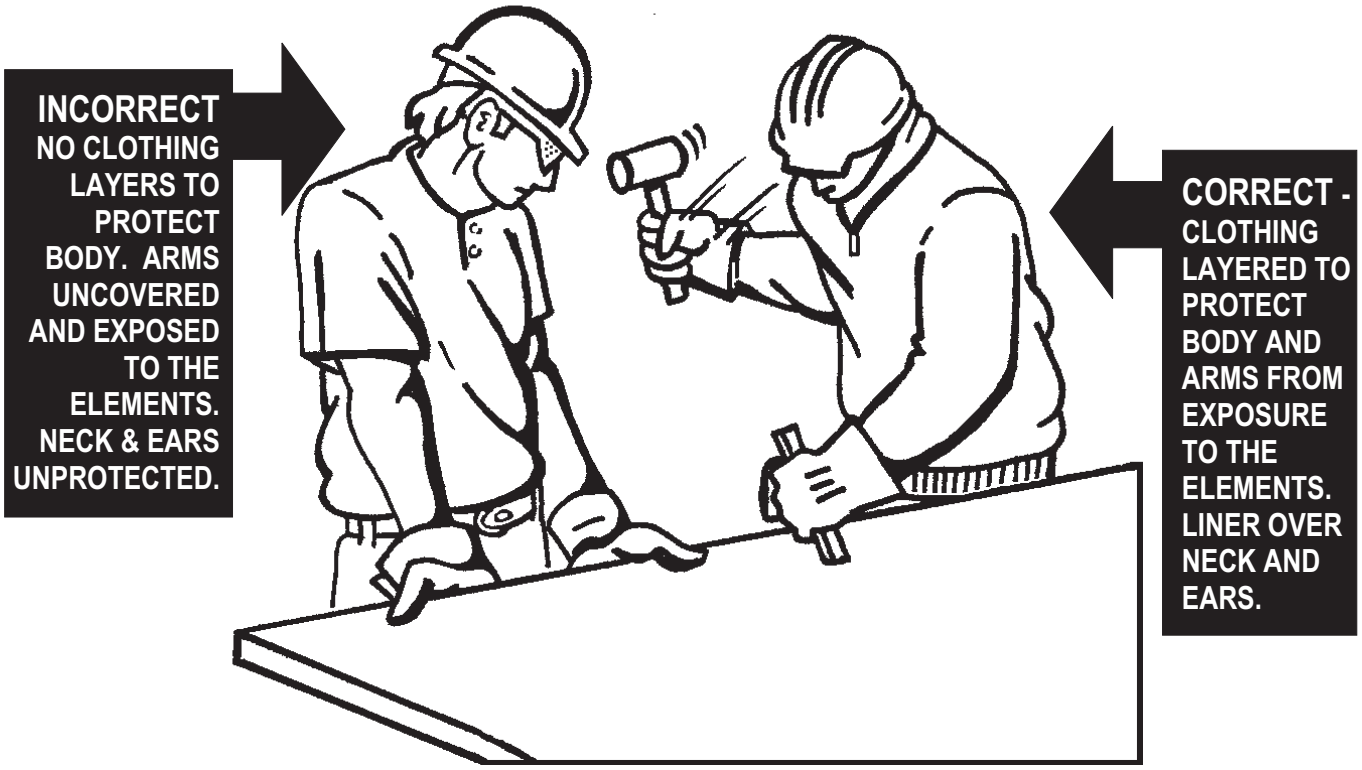

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