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Inclement Weather & Lightning Training

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Division -- Missoula

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Job Name -- WSF

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Attendance -- Zachary Wynegar, Chris Jenkins, Loren Maberry, Todd McPherson

Comments:

As we move into December, shorter days and unpredictable weather create added safety challenges. Rain, wind, cold temperatures, and lightning can all pose risks to workers both on and off the construction site. In addition, with less daylight, we must make sure we have proper lighting whenever needed.

Inclement Weather Hazards

Construction doesn't stop for the seasons, but our approach to work must adjust. Each weather condition creates different hazards:

Rain and Wet Conditions

Slippery Surfaces: Watch for slick ladders, scaffolds, and work areas. Wear slip-resistant boots.

Electrical Hazards: Keep cords, tools, and power sources away from standing water. Use GFCIs on all temporary power.

Reduced Visibility: Rain can make it harder to see equipment, vehicles, and workers. Always wear your hi-vis gear.

Wind

Secure Materials: Tie down or store loose material, tools, and debris.

Lifts and Scaffolds: Stop working if winds exceed manufacturer limits.

Stay Clear of Edges: High winds can cause loss of balance.

Cold Weather

Dress in Layers: Stay dry to prevent hypothermia.

Warm-Up Breaks: Take short breaks to warm up if needed.

Hydrate: Even in cold conditions, your body needs fluids to function properly.

Snow & Ice Hazards

Snow and ice create some of the most dangerous winter conditions on a job site. They reduce traction, hide hazards, and add weight to structures and equipment.· **Slips, Trips, and Falls**
Walking Surfaces: Walk slowly, take small steps, and use handrails.· **Footwear:** Wear boots with good traction; add ice cleats when appropriate.

: **Hidden Hazards:** Snow can cover holes, cords, materials, or uneven ground;probe the area if unsure.· **Ladders, Scaffolds & Roofs**
Clear Ice First: Never climb a ladder or scaffold with ice or snow on rungs or platforms.

: **Watch for Soft Spots:** Snow loads can weaken temporary platforms, roofs, and decks.

: **No Work on Snow-Covered Edges:** Edges become extremely slick;remove snow and de-ice before accessing these areas.

Lightning Safety

Lightning can strike up to 10 miles away from a storm, and no job task is worth the risk.

If Lightning Is Seen or Thunder Is Heard:

Stop Work Immediately: Suspend all outdoor activities.

Seek Shelter: Move to a fully enclosed building or a hard-topped vehicle. Avoid open structures or scaffolds.

Stay Away From: Metal ladders, rebar, fencing, or any conductive material.

Wait It Out: Do not resume work until **30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder.**

If You're Caught Outside with No Shelter:

Avoid high ground, open areas, or isolated tall objects.

Stay away from water, metal objects, and large machinery.

Crouch low to the ground, minimizing contact with it : **do not lie flat.**

Lighting and Visibility

With shorter daylight hours, lighting becomes a critical part of jobsite safety.

On the Jobsite:

Inspect Temporary Lights: Make sure they're working and properly secured.

Use Task Lighting: Provide extra light in dark or enclosed areas and Adjust lights so hazards aren't hidden.

Check Vehicle and Equipment Lights: Ensure headlights, taillights, and backup lights work properly.

Off the Jobsite:

Drive Carefully: Rain and darkness reduce visibility'slow down and stay alert.

Personal Safety: Use headlights, wear reflective clothing, and take your time walking in low light areas.

Safe Work Practices

When working outdoors, check the weather forecast before every shift.

Stop working immediately if lightning is seen or thunder is heard.

Keep electrical cords and equipment dry and off wet surfaces.

Report any damaged lighting, cords, or unsafe conditions.

Always use GFCI protection in damp or outdoor areas.

Discussion Points

What's our plan if lightning is observed during work:

Do we have proper lighting for our current tasks:

How do we secure our materials and tools in strong wind or rain:

Remember This!

Safety doesn't stop when the sun goes down or the weather turns bad. If weather turns dangerous : stop, shelter, and stay alert. Plan, stay visible and use proper lighting to make sure everyone goes home safe : no matter the conditions.