

January 2003

The Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic Public Safety, Virginia Beach Safety Storefront publishes this SafetyGram and widest dissemination within your organization as encouraged. Please post on official bulletin boards and route to your staff. Our web site at www.nasoceana.navy.mil/safety also has lots of additional information to improve your safety posture.

Happy New Year from the Safety Office!! Well it's a new year and we hope everyone had a safe and fun holiday season. We hope last years SafetyGram's were of some help to your activity and provided topics for training, discussion, recall's, etc. We'd like to think they were used for other than fillers for bulletin boards. We're always responsive to feedback, negative or positive on SafetyGram's, Safety Storefront website, and POW notes. Tell us what you'd like to see and what you think. Call us at 433-2360 or 462-6622. The following excerpt comes from the NAVOSH 2003 planner and Views on Safety presentation available at <http://www.navosh.net>. Now it's time to get back to work we have a lot to do this year.

A leader's commitment to operational excellence is better demonstrated by actions than words.



Chief Machinist's Mate (MM) supervisor and instructor teaches Machinist's Mate Firemen about the evaporator during MM "A" school course. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st class Michael Worner.

"Leadership ensures consistency with Process Review & Measurement System (PR&MS) processes and Safety and Occupational Health Program requirements." (OPNAVINST 5100.23F). Leadership includes planning, commitment, policy, goals and objectives tracked to completion based on a comprehensive annual self-assessment in addition to a written, site-specific program, and employee involvement.

Safety in Speeches <http://www.navosh.net/library/otherdocs.cfm>
Views on Safety <http://www.navosh.net/library/otherdocs.cfm>

Safety Leadership

◆ SECRETARY OF THE NAVY GORDON ENGLAND

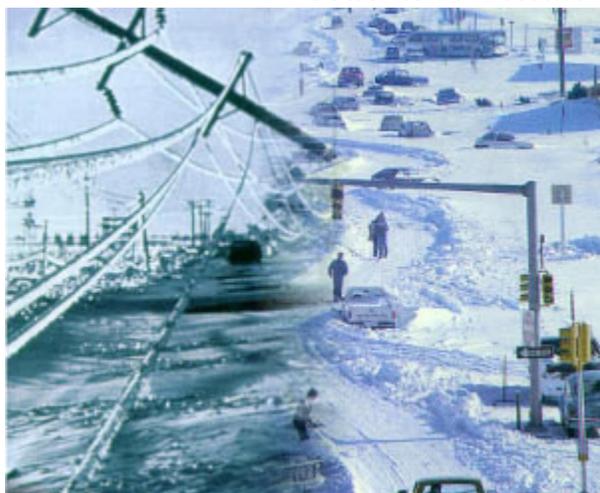
□ ***"I am the Chief of Safety. I am responsible for safety. People ask me what my first priority is -- it's people. Safety is absolutely #1 in importance in taking care of people. If people are really what's most important, then you don't let things happen to your most valuable asset."***

□ Thank you for the great work you do serving our Nation, and thank you for showing you care for yourself and your family by coming back to duty alive, well, and ready to serve again.

◆ CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS ADM VERN CLARK

□ ***"Sailors are our most valuable assets. Personnel readiness is central to our mission --- and this readiness starts with safety. Make safety YOUR responsibility."***

Winter Storms: The Deceptive Killers



The information below is from a guide with the same name published by the National Weather Service. This preparedness guide explains the dangers of winter weather and suggests life-saving action **YOU** can take. With this information, **YOU** can recognize winter weather threats, develop an action plan and be ready when severe winter weather threatens. Remember...your safety is up to **YOU**.

Why Talk About Winter Weather?

- Each year, dozens of Americans die due to exposure to cold. Add to that number, vehicle accidents and fatalities, fires due to dangerous use of heaters and other winter weather fatalities and you have a significant threat.
- Threats, such as hypothermia and frostbite, can

lead to loss of fingers and toes or cause permanent kidney, pancreas and liver injury and even death. You must prepare properly to avoid these extreme dangers. You also need to know what to do if you see symptoms of these threats.

- A major winter storm can last for several days and be accompanied by high winds, freezing rain or sleet, heavy snowfall and cold temperatures.
- People can become trapped at home or in a car, without utilities or other assistance.
- Attempting to walk for help in a winter storm can be a deadly decision.
- The aftermath of a winter storm can have an impact on a community or region for days, weeks or even months.
- Extremely cold temperatures, heavy snow and coastal flooding can cause hazardous conditions and hidden problems.

Hypothermia

Introduction

People who work outside or enjoy outdoor recreational activities face certain risks. Hypothermia is one of these risks that is often overlooked or not recognized. Because hypothermia can affect reasoning and judgment, you can quickly find yourself in a life-or-death situation without realizing that you are in danger.

Recognition

The symptoms of hypothermia are varied and depend on the body's core temperature. A person suffering from a mild case may exhibit shivering and a lack of coordination, while a person suffering from severe hypothermia may be incoherent, exhibit muscular rigidity and can potentially succumb to cardiac arrest. The chart below shows the correlation between core body temperature and hypothermia symptoms.

Severity of Hypothermia	Body Temperature (°F)	Symptoms
Mild	98.6 - 97	Shivering Begins
	97 - 95	Cold sensation, skin numbness, goose bumps, lack of hand coordination
Moderate	95 - 93	Intense shivering, general lack of muscular coordination, slow or stumbling pace, mild confusion, pale skin.
	93-90	Violent shivering, gross lack of muscular coordination, mental sluggishness, amnesia, difficulty speaking.
Severe	90 - 86	Shivering stops, muscular stiffness, extreme confusion or incoherence, irrational behavior, inability to stand, skin appears blue and or puffy.
	86-82	Muscular rigidity, semiconscious, pulse and respiration decrease, dilation of pupils, skin ice-cold to touch.
	82 - 78	Unconsciousness, pulmonary edema, pulse and heartbeat erratic, cardiac and respiratory failure, death.

Prevention

There are several steps you can take to reduce your risk of hypothermia before you head out into cold, wet conditions. These steps include:

- Wear proper clothing. The ideal clothing for extended periods in a cold and/or wet environment consists of a breathable layer next to the skin (such as cotton or polypropylene), an insulating middle layer (wool, which continues to insulate even when wet, is a good choice) and a waterproof, but breathable, outer layer (such as nylon or Gore-Tex™).
- Stay hydrated when outdoors.
- Use the buddy system when spending time outdoors, if possible.
- Be familiar with the signs of hypothermia. Early recognition of hypothermia can help prevent you from facing a life or death situation.

Commonly Asked Questions

Q. Can hypothermia be a problem even if the temperature is well above freezing?

A. Yes. Hypothermia can occur any time that the body cannot generate enough heat to maintain its core temperature, regardless of the time of year. Even on a sunny summer day, a person immersed in 40° to 50°F water may reach the exhaustion point (due to a lowered core temperature) in as little as 30 minutes, and death from hypothermia may result in only three hours.

Q. Can the medications I'm taking make me more susceptible to hypothermia?

A. Yes. A number of commonly prescribed medications can affect the body's resistance to hypothermia. Sedatives, anti-depressants, tranquilizers and cardio-vascular drugs can all affect the body's ability to regulate temperature. If you are concerned about the effect your medications may have on your body's resistance to hypothermia, please contact your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

Body Mechanics

BODY MECHANICS:

Are the body movements we perform to accomplish a task, either at home or at work. They are very important to the health of the back. Body Mechanics fall into three basic categories:

- ! **Sitting**
- ! **Standing**
- ! **Material Handling**

SITTING

A sitting job combined with bad posture can be very stressful on the back and cause disc pressure and muscle fatigue. To avoid back problems:

- ! keep the normal curves in the spine
- ! keep work within easy reach
- ! adjust chair so that feet rest comfortably on the floor
- ! change sitting positions frequently
- ! stand up once every hour

STANDING

A standing job can put pressure on discs and joints and cause muscle fatigue.

- ! stand with legs shoulder width apart with one foot slightly ahead of the other
- ! stretch periodically to compensate for any long term awkward positions
- ! wear shoes with good cushioning
- ! stand on anti-fatigue mats

MATERIAL HANDLING

Proper body mechanics is vital to preventing back injuries.

- ! keep the load close to the body
- ! check the weight of the load before lifting, if load is too heavy, get help or use a lifting device
- ! place legs about shoulder width apart with one foot slightly in front of the other
- ! tighten stomach muscles and lift with legs, keeping your head looking forward