



# WisCon Words of Wisdom

Volume 5 | Issue 2 | February 3, 2025

## OSHA Penalty Adjustments

Each year, OSHA adjusts violation penalty amounts to ensure civil monetary penalties remain a powerful tool for achieving compliance and deterring future violations.

Below are the new maximum penalty amounts that may be assessed for violations after January 15, 2025.

For more information refer to the [2025 Annual Adjustments to OSHA Civil Penalties](#) memorandum.

Type of Violation	Penalty
Serious, Other-Than-Serious, and Posting Requirements	\$16,550 per violation
Failure to Abate	\$16,550 per day beyond the abatement date
Willful or Repeated	\$165,514 per violation

## Upcoming Webinars

February 25th: Workplace Health and Safety for the EHS Work

[Registration Link](#)

### We want to hear from you!

What content would you like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Let us know [here](#).

## Burn Awareness at Work

It's National Burn Awareness Week (February 2-8)! Let's commit to a burn-free workplace.

**Think about these hazards:** Hot surfaces like machinery and ovens, chemicals, faulty electrical equipment, and fire risks. Always use the right personal protective equipment (PPE) and follow procedures. Know where your safety data sheets (SDSs) and fire extinguishers are!

**Here's how we can help prevent burns:**

- Train everyone on burn hazards and what to do in an emergency.
- Make sure first aid is available and people know how to treat burns.
- Post clear safety reminders in the workplace.
- Practice fire drills regularly.

## Be a Lifesaver in the Workplace

CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) is a lifesaving technique that can make the difference in a medical emergency. While we all hope such situations never arise, being prepared can significantly increase the chances of survival for a colleague, customer, or visitor.

**February is American Heart Month!** This is a great time to raise awareness about heart health and the importance of CPR. **Join your peers in wearing red this Friday, February 6 for the American Heart Association's® National Wear Red Day®** to show your support for heart disease awareness.

**Why should employees learn CPR?**

- **Workplace safety:** Accidents and medical emergencies can happen anywhere, including the workplace. CPR training equips employees to respond effectively in such critical situations.
- **Enhanced preparedness:** Having CPR-trained employees creates a safer and more prepared work environment. It fosters a culture of safety and well-being.
- **Teamwork and confidence:** CPR training encourages teamwork and builds confidence among employees, knowing they can rely on each other in times of need.

**A valuable skill:** CPR is a valuable life skill that employees can carry with them outside

(Continues on Page 2)

# Protecting Workers from Cold Stress: A Key Safety Concern

Anyone working in cold environments is at risk for cold stress, which can lead to serious health issues. Workers such as snow cleanup crews, sanitation workers, construction workers, warehousing, dock loaders, meatpackers, and emergency response personnel often face prolonged exposure to low temperatures. Understanding cold stress, its effects, and how to prevent it is crucial for keeping workers safe.

## What Is Cold Stress?

Cold stress occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it, affecting the skin and internal core temperature. It is more dangerous when wind chill—combining wind speed and temperature—makes it feel much colder than the actual air temperature. For instance, at 40°F with 35 mph winds, it feels like 28°F. Cold stress can cause severe health problems, including frostbite, hypothermia, and trench foot.

## Risk Factors for Cold Stress:

- Wet clothing
- Improper dress
- Exhaustion
- Preexisting health conditions (e.g., hypertension, diabetes)

Poor physical conditioning

## Common Cold-Induced Illnesses:

- **Hypothermia:** A dangerously low body temperature below 95°F. Symptoms range from shivering and confusion to loss of consciousness.
- **Frostbite:** Freezing of skin and tissue, mainly affecting extremities, with possible amputation in severe cases.
- **Trench Foot:** Caused by prolonged exposure to cold, wet

conditions, leading to numbness, swelling, and potential tissue damage.

**Chilblains:** Painful inflammation of small blood vessels in the skin after repeated exposure to cold just above freezing.

## Prevention and Safety Tips:

- **Dress Appropriately:** Wear three layers—an inner layer of wool or synthetic material, a middle insulating layer, and an outer layer to block wind and rain. Avoid cotton.
- **Stay Dry:** Moisture accelerates heat loss. Carry extra socks, gloves, and hats to stay warm.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink warm, sweetened liquids (avoid alcohol).
- **Take Regular Breaks:** Rest in warm areas to avoid exhaustion and cold stress.
- **Buddy System:** Work in pairs to monitor each other's health and watch for signs of cold stress.

**Employer Responsibilities:** Employers must train workers on cold stress, ensure proper protective equipment and safety measures, and implement engineering controls like heaters and wind shields.

By recognizing the symptoms of cold stress, dressing appropriately, and following safety protocols, workers can stay safe and prevent serious injuries caused by cold environments.

## Additional Resources

For more information, visit the [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\) on Cold Stress](#) and [OSHA Emergency Preparedness Guide for Cold Stress](#).

OSHA Quick Cards, Protecting Workers from Cold Stress, visit [OSHA Quick Cards Cold Stress](#).

## Be a Lifesaver in the Workplace (continued)

of the workplace, benefiting their families and communities.

### CPR training options for employees:

- **On-site training:** Organize a CPR training session at your workplace, led by certified instructors. This allows for convenient and cost-effective training for a group of employees.
- **Individual courses:** Encourage employees to pursue individual CPR training through organizations like the American Heart

Association® or the American Red Cross®.

- **Online resources:** Supplement in-person training with online resources and refreshers to keep skills up-to-date.

Investing in CPR training for employees demonstrates a commitment to their safety and well-being. It empowers them to act with confidence and potentially save lives in critical situations.

Wisconsin Safety and Health Consultation Program

Phone: (800) 947-0553 | Email: [wiscon@slh.wisc.edu](mailto:wiscon@slh.wisc.edu)

<http://slh.wisc.edu/wiscon>

WisCon Public Sector Consultation

Phone: (608) 262-6763 | Email: [publicsectorconsulting@slh.wisc.edu](mailto:publicsectorconsulting@slh.wisc.edu)

[Request Services](#)