

SAFETYPOINT



Scrapyard Safety Training

Baby, It's Cold Outside!

As if to remind us who's in charge, Mother Nature once again is giving us the cold shoulder, not to mention cold hands and feet. While most folks brave the cold-weather season pretty well, it's important to know how to protect yourself from potential cold-weather dangers.

Signs of Frostbite

If your skin looks mottled or pale and you're experiencing "pins and needles" in your hands, feet, nose, ears or cheeks, then you're likely experiencing frostnip, which is a signal that you need to get into a warm, dry environment immediately so you don't develop [frostbite](#). Frostbite is when tiny ice crystals form in skin tissue. Other signs include a tiny white dot on the nose or on the tip of one or more fingers. Also, dark-skinned people may appear pale, or their skin may look gray; fair-skinned people should be on the lookout for yellowish skin.

What does frostbite feel like? You likely will have numbness in the affected area, as well as itching, burning or sharp pain. However, if caught quickly, frostbite is completely reversible. If not, it can turn into hypothermia, which is when a person's core body temperature drops below 95 degrees. This medical emergency, which can impair the brain and muscles, is a potential killer.

Signs of Hypothermia

Be on the lookout for the "umbles." That's when a person mumbles, stumbles, fumbles and grumbles. All are symptoms of early [hypothermia](#). If you see someone who is shivering uncontrollably, doesn't seem to be thinking straight, speaks with a slur, or has trouble holding onto objects, get them into a warm environment immediately. If the symptoms fail to improve within a short time, call a doctor or go to the nearest emergency room.

*Voice of the Recycling Industry*

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