

Winter Safety Guide 2025

With winter and cold temperatures in full swing, here are some helpful safety tips and reminders to keep you and your coworkers safe and healthy this season.

Dress for the Weather

Wear clothing to keep the body appropriately protected from cold and hazardous conditions:

- ❄️ A hat to keep your head warm.
- ❄️ A scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth.
- ❄️ Sleeves that are snug at the wrist to keep water and snow out.
- ❄️ Mittens or Gloves
- ❄️ Water-resistant coat and shoes.
- ❄️ Wearing multiple small layers helps create insulation and regulate body temperature.



Protect Tools and Equipment

Cold and precipitation can degrade and damage tools and equipment and should be stored so that they are protected from cold and harsh conditions.

This includes Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as hard hats, safety glasses, arc-rated and flame resistant (FR) gear, and fall protection equipment.

Minimize Cold Exposure

Minimize time spent outdoors as much as possible. This includes minimizing non-emergency outdoor work.

If work must be done outdoors, ensure employees have appropriate clothing and winter gear and allow for frequent breaks in warm areas, such as in buildings or warm vehicles.



Space Heaters

Space heaters are a leading cause of residential and workplace fires due to heat-caused and electrical fire hazards.

Because of the hazards, personal space heaters are not permitted at UMBC. If your office or work area is too cold, place a work request with Facilities Management or Res Life to have the temperature adjusted.

Facilities Management may issue a code-compliant space heater for temporary use if a heating/temperature issue in the work environment cannot be immediately resolved.



Winter Slip and Fall Prevention

Icy and slick conditions can present quickly during periods of snow, sleet, and freezing rain. Prevent slips and falls by:

- ❄️ Only using salted, treated walking paths
- ❄️ Wear appropriate footwear and traction devices if you have them (such as ice cleats)
- ❄️ Report icy or slick walking areas to Facilities Management. If salt is available, spread some down over the area.
- ❄️ “Walk like a penguin” to keep yourself steady if you must traverse over an untreated area
- ❄️ Dry off wet shoes and boots when entering a building, don’t track snow or water inside.



You can still get dehydrated in the cold!

Whenever we exhale, our body loses fluids. Dry/less humid air in the winter can exacerbate bodily fluid loss. The air also dries our skin which can make it harder for our bodies to retain water.

Cold weather suppresses our bodies’ thirst reflex, so it’s important to still remember to hydrate, even if you don’t feel thirsty.

