

While many people dream of a picture-perfect holiday season with snow covered trees or mountains, snow and ice aren't an ally for workers who are required to be outside in the elements. When pairing the treacherous ice, snow and cold temperatures with the busiest time of the year for delivery services, incident rates have the potential to rise exponentially. Parcel delivery drivers and couriers are required to be outside in all four seasons including the dreaded winter weather, exposing them to potential hypothermia, falls and motor vehicle accidents



According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 20,460 ice, sleet and snow related injuries occurred in 2017. As one would expect, the states with higher rates of injuries were in colder climates including New York, Connecticut, Utah, Nebraska, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Nevertheless, drivers throughout the country should take precautions when working in winter weather regardless of their geographical location. Below are a few tips to stay safe this winter season.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a potentially dangerous drop in body temperature, usually caused by prolonged exposure to cold temperatures. The risk of cold exposure increases as the winter months arrive. Confusion and fatigue can set in, hampering a person's ability to understand what's happening and make intelligent choices.

Symptoms of Hypothermia

- Shivering
- Slow shallow breathing
- Weak pulse
- Low energy
- Loss of consciousness

Preventing Hypothermia

- Wear clothing that covers the full body including hands, ears and face.
- Wear layered clothing including wool or silk as a base layer with water repellent best suitable as an outer layer.
- Keep the body as dry as possible. Carry an extra set of gloves or socks in the event your hands or feet become wet.

Ice/Snow

When driving, do not slam on the brakes, tap the brakes and allow ample space between the car in front of you.

Be aware of the potential of black ice on both the roadway while driving and sidewalks while delivery packages.

Use caution when traveling on bridges as bridges become slick with ice before other roadways.

Take your time when entering and exiting the truck cab and utilize three points of contact using the grab rail.

Windshields/Mirrors

In the case of frost, snow, or ice covering your delivery vehicle it is important to care for the windows and mirrors before operating the vehicle.

- Defrost and clean the front windshield fully before operating the vehicle.
- Do not stand on the tires to clean the windshield.
- Do not operate the vehicle until the windshield is completely clear of any obstructions.
- Clean all review mirrors of frost or ice and ensure all mirrors are free of obstructions.

Monitor Weather Conditions

Monitor the weather conditions outside and make note of any changes while completing deliveries. If precipitation is present, take extra precaution as ice or snow is a known contributor to slips and falls.