

Ice, Snow and Winter Footing

About 8 minutes to deliver

Black ice on a step, snow hiding everything that was already there, and the walk that gets people hurt more than the work does.

In winter the walk to and from the work hurts more people than the work. A slip on a step, a truck bed, or a patch of ice in the parking area — wrists, elbows, hips, heads.

THE ICE YOU CANNOT SEE

- Black ice forms first on steps, ramps, metal decking, plate, manhole covers and bridges — anything that loses heat from underneath.
- Refreeze after dark is the worst of it. Ground that thawed at two in the afternoon is a sheet at six.
- Under fresh snow. Snow hides ice, holes, cords, offcuts, kerbs, and the trench you know is there.
- Runoff and drips from roofs, downpipes and equipment refreeze in exactly the places people walk.

WALKING ON IT

- Walk like a penguin. Short flat steps, feet pointed slightly out, weight over your front foot, arms free.
- Hands out of pockets. People break wrists because their hands were somewhere else; people break heads because their hands were in their pockets.
- Three points getting out of a vehicle or a cab, and test the ground before you put weight on it. Never jump down — a jump onto ice ends with you flat on your back.
- Use the handrail on every set of steps.
- Take the cleared route even if it is longer, and take shorter steps on turns.
- Boots with real tread. Worn smooth soles are the single biggest factor, and traction cleats are worth having in the truck — with the reminder that they are lethal on smooth indoor floors and come off at the door.

KEEPING THE SITE WALKABLE

- Clear and treat first thing and again through the day. Sun makes water, night makes ice.
- Salt stops working around 15°F. Below that you need a different product or grit for traction.
- Grit the step and the ramp before the flat ground — that is where people fall.
- Mark what is under the snow before it snows: holes, cords, hoses, kerbs, edges.
- Mats at every entrance, and mop the puddle that walks in on everyone's boots.
- Report the patch you nearly went over on. The next person will not see it either.

HIGHER UP

- Snow and ice on a roof, scaffold or lift hides the edge and everything else. Snow-covered work at height needs looking at again before anyone goes up, not just proceeding more carefully.
- Clear ladder rungs and your boots before you climb.
- Shovelling is a heart-attack job — cold air, sudden heavy exertion, often first thing in the morning. Warm up, take breaks, push rather than lift, and let somebody else do it if that is not your kind of work.

ASK THE CREW

- Where does ice form first on this site, and who treats it?
- Is anyone here in worn boots, and do we have cleats?
- What is under the snow that people need to know about?

29 CFR 1926.25 · 29 CFR 1910.22 · 29 CFR 1926.1053

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Ice, Snow and Winter Footing

About 8 minutes to deliver · 29 CFR 1926.25 · 29 CFR 1910.22 · 29 CFR 1926.1053

Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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