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# News Release



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## Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission of New Brunswick

**For Immediate Release**

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### **WHSCC URGES NEW BRUNSWICKERS TO USE SNOW SENSE**

**Saint John:** With unusually high temperatures prolonging the fall, the 15-40 centimetres dumped on New Brunswick's doorstep recently serves as a chilly reminder that, yes, winter really is here.

"While it is important to practice safe working habits all through the year, winter poses additional risks, so we urge everyone to be more vigilant at this time of year," said Dave Greason, vice-president of the WHSCC's WorkSafe Services.

"Snow can bring with it a lot of joy, but also a lot of pain when you have to shovel it or drive in it. Shovelling snow is a strenuous exercise, and is hard on the heart and back," Greason said. Make sure you do some warm-ups before you start shovelling to loosen up the muscles, and don't over-exert yourself. The type of shovel you use is also important – it should be lightweight (no more than 1.5 kg or three pounds) and the blade should not be too large.

Wearing the proper clothing in winter is only common sense, but it is especially important for those who work in the cold, in industries such as construction, trucking, farming and logging, where the potential for hypothermia and frostbite is greater, Greason said. It is an employer's responsibility to ensure that workers are properly attired and supervised when working under extreme cold. The WHSCC's Risk Alert, *Surviving the Cold*, provides excellent tips on how to work safely in the cold, including how to prevent and detect cold stress, and the proper clothing and personal protective equipment required.

"The snow and cold weather also present a bigger risk for slips, trips and falls," he said. "In fact, with the snap of snow and rain two weeks ago, one company reported six falls in one day."

Good housekeeping practices, such as ensuring drives and walkways are cleared and sanded, and mopping up any spills or melted snow indoors will reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls. And for those who spend a lot of time working outdoors, the proper footwear is essential, and the non-slip tracks that can be hooked onto boots are a good idea.

Snow and ice significantly increase the danger on our roads, Greason said, so pedestrians and drivers alike must exercise extreme caution. "Visibility is considerably reduced, and roads become more treacherous, so it's

important to reduce speed and drive only when absolutely necessary during bad weather. Drivers should ensure their tires have good treads, and that all snow and ice is removed from their vehicles, he said.

“Loss of life and limbs is always tragic, but seems more so at this time of year. The WHSCC urges all New Brunswickers, whether at work, on the roads, or at home, to think and act safely.”

For more information on how to keep safe this winter, including a copy of the Risk Alert, *Surviving the Cold*, contact the WHSCC at 1 800 222-9775.

#### **ABOUT THE WHSCC**

The WHSCC administers no-fault workplace accident and disability insurance for employers and their workers, funded solely through assessments on employers. The WHSCC is committed to the prevention of workplace injuries and accidents through education and the enforcement of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.  
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