

# Understanding Wind Chill Index

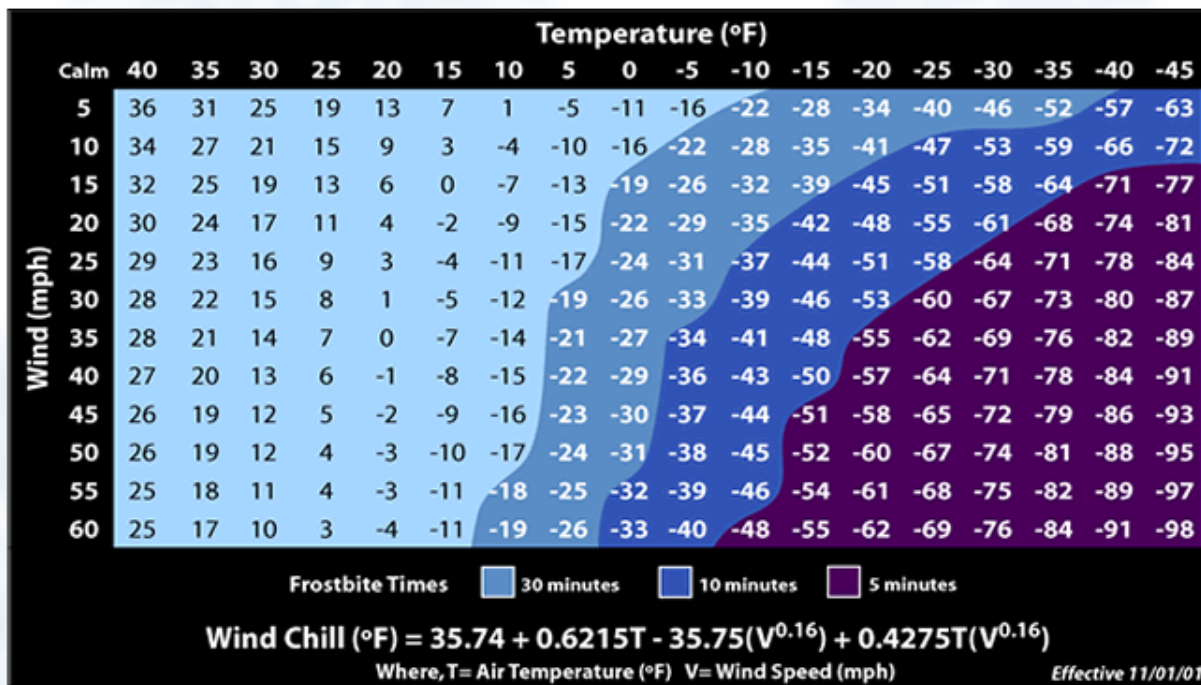
Cold weather poses many hazards for those individuals who are required to be exposed to it during their work. The winter months bring the possibility of additional workplace injuries and illnesses. Some direct consequences of being exposed to cold environments include frostbite, trench foot, and hypothermia. One factor to consider when working in a cold-weather environment is the effect wind speed has on the temperature on the body.

## Wind Chill Index

Wind can make cold temperatures feel even harsher. For instance, at 10 degrees Fahrenheit with 20 MPH winds, it feels like -9 degrees. The National Weather Service issues wind chill advisories when this dangerous combination occurs. Below is a useful wind chill chart from the National Weather Service to help determine the actual temperature when wind is a factor.



## Wind Chill Chart



## Best Practices to Prevent Cold Stress

- Limit work in extreme cold whenever possible.
- Allow time to acclimatize to colder conditions.
- Dress in layers and keep clothing dry.
- Take breaks in warm areas or vehicles.
- Drink warm beverages to maintain core temperature.
- Monitor coworkers for signs of distress and assist as needed.

Cold weather brings additional hazards for workers who are exposed to colder temperatures. Winds can create a dangerous situation in cold weather climates. Follow best practices when working in cold weather environments to lessen the chance of becoming a victim of frostbite, trench foot, or hypothermia.

