

Winter Weather Policy - Outdoor Operations

To ensure the safety of all team members working outdoors during winter conditions. Northern Michigan weather can change rapidly; this policy provides a framework for decision-making while allowing flexibility based on real-time conditions.

Safety Comes First

- No job, deadline, or customer requirement is more important than crew safety.
- Any employee may **stop work immediately** if they feel unsafe due to weather, footing, cold exposure, or reduced visibility.
- There will be **no retaliation or negative consequences** for calling out unsafe conditions.

Management Authority to Call a Work Day

- The **Operational Management Team** has the authority to **delay start times, pause operations, or cancel the workday entirely** when weather creates unsafe conditions.
- Decisions may be made based on:
 - Active winter storm warnings or advisories
 - Temperatures posing frostbite risk (e.g., wind chills below -15°F)
 - Icy, unstable, or snow-covered work surfaces
 - High winds that make ladder or roof work unsafe
 - Visibility issues (heavy snow, blowing snow, whiteouts)
- When possible, decisions will be communicated at least **1–2 hours before reporting time**, but rapid changes may occur.

Employee Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

- If a worker arrives at a jobsite and conditions appear more dangerous than anticipated (e.g., ice buildup, hidden hazards under snow), they may call **"Safety Hold"** and request reassessment.
- A supervisor or manager will review and decide whether to proceed, modify the work, or end the task for the day.

Required Safety Practices

- Mandatory cold-weather PPE: insulated gloves, waterproof boots with traction, weather-appropriate layers, hats, neck protection.
- Use ice cleats, salt, sand, or traction aids when walking surfaces are slick.
- Take scheduled **warm-up breaks** in heated vehicles or indoor spaces.
- Hydrate regularly even in cold conditions—dehydration increases cold stress.

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Weather Monitoring

- Management will monitor conditions through:
 - National Weather Service updates
 - Local radar and hourly forecasts
 - Road condition reports
- Supervisors should re-check conditions throughout the day as weather can shift quickly.

Communication Protocol

- Cancellations or delays will be communicated through group text, call tree, or the designated crew app.
- Workers must confirm receipt.
- If a worker cannot safely travel due to road conditions, they must inform their supervisor as soon as possible (no penalty).

Example Triggers for Halting or Cancelling Work

- Wind chills below **-20°F**
- Snowfall rates creating whiteout or rapid accumulation on ladders/roof edges
- Roofs or elevated surfaces with ice that cannot be mitigated
- Winds above **25–30 mph** for ladder or elevated work
- Freezing rain or mixed precipitation that makes footing unpredictable

Culture of Safety

- Everyone on the team is responsible for each other's safety.
- Speak up if you see unsafe behavior or conditions.
- When in doubt—**we stop and reassess.**

Michigan Gutters Inc.