



## COLD WEATHER REHAB

*Information, in-part, provided by IAFF.org*

### COLD WEATHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Food and water requirements may be higher than expected, as people burn more calories in cold weather
- Maintaining proper field sanitation and personal hygiene is more difficult.
- Sick and injured individuals are susceptible to medical complications produced by cold.
- Operational problems often arise in cold weather:
  - Physical performance decrements
  - Equipment malfunctions
  - Slow movement of vehicles and personnel.

### HEAT LOSS

- Wind will increase body temperature loss as it blows across the firefighter.
- If the firefighter is wet or wading in water, heat loss from the body may be accelerated by as much as 25 times.

**Hypothermia** is a subnormal temperature within the internal body core.

- A person suffering from hypothermia will exhibit poor coordination, will often stumble, may slur speech, and suffer from mental dulling with impairment of judgment and ability to work.
- Once severe shivering occurs the victim may not be able to rewarm without an outside heat source.
- Hypothermia depresses normal circulation and vital signs, thus measurement of heart rate, pulse and blood pressure may be difficult or impossible.

### REHAB AND KEEPING 'EM BATTLE READY

- Provide firefighters proper PPE for environment.
- Issue special cold weather gear when needed.
- Carry extra gloves, hoods, and other equipment on apparatus.
- Avoid working in standing water, rain, or overspray from hoselines.
- Rotate from operational positions to rest/rehab positions on a frequent basis.
- Ensure water, warm beverages and food is available for long operations
- Use apparatus as warming stations with MODERATE temperatures, Warm Up SLOWLY!
- COLD – Keep it Clean, Avoid Overheating, Wear Layers Loose, Keep it Dry