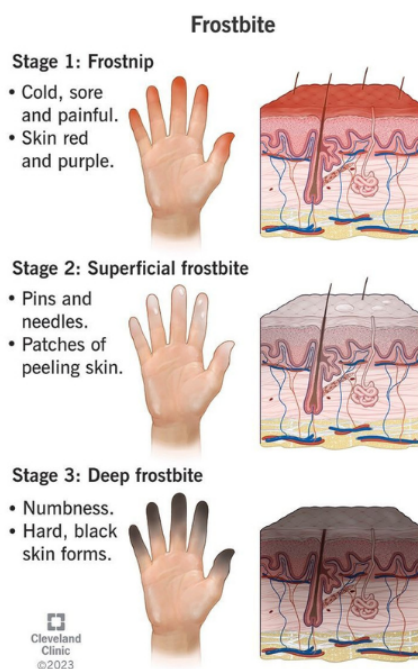


ULTRA ACCESS January Newsletter

Looking after your hands in zero (and sub-zero) temperatures.



Scaffolding work consists of lots of heavy manual labour, with the trade overall being about 95% manual handling.

Bare hands —> meeting ice cold steel is not a particularly pleasant experience, and many times one's hands would "stick" to the materials they were handling.

Why?

- Fingers (and hands) can start to stick to icy steel at temperatures close to freezing (around 0°C or 32°F) due to the moisture on your skin - that's always present - rapidly freezing when it comes into contact with cold metal surfaces, causing adhesion.

However, the exact temperature required depends on factors like humidity and the specific surface makeup of the steel.

At extremely low temperatures, sticking to metal can be a sign of potential frostbite (infographic attached below), so be cautious handling anything in very cold environments without correct PPE.

Either way moisture is the key reason for adhesion, and will pose less of an issue if that element was removed by the use of safety gloves.

Nitrile (disposable) Safety Gloves, for example are one such pair that are widely available. Very cheap at about £2-£2.50 a pair, comes in various sizes and readily available to purchase online.
(not great in the rain, but that's another post for another time).

Having full use of one's hands is imperative and safety critical for a Scaffolder (and anyone else, like a Roofer, Bricklayer, Chippy, etc) who relies on their hands to earn their living. It can be painful enough trying to handle scaffolding with a splinter in your hand, so imagine the pain in doing so with a section of your fingertips, or palms ripped off due to being stuck - iced to a frozen piece of scaffolding, or with frostbite?

It could mean several days off (or longer) to recover, meaning more lost wages in the winter. Frostbite in extreme cases could lead to finger amputations...
... something to consider before going out to work in the severe cold.

ULTRA ACCESS
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