

During the Storm

Introduction:

If your job involves working outdoors, it is recommended that prior to any activity, employers check the forecast for weather conditions, and reschedule if necessary, to avoid any hazardous outcomes from severe weather. All employees, should become familiar with weather related terms including advisories, watches, and warnings that are used to determine the severity of approaching storms.

If the business is open during the storm, employees are expected to make all possible effort to be present. The Fair Work Act of 2009 allows employers to rearrange work hours and conditions due to severe weather conditions. Employers will determine what employees are entitled to if the business closes due the storm.

Discussion Points:

- The company's Emergency Action Plan should include safety procedures for outdoor workers, and for all workers in the case of severe weather.
- Emphasize the importance of being prepared to evacuate.
- Test communication plans with employees to ensure communication during and outside of business hours.
- Participate in drills, to encourage employees to be prepared for severe weather at the workplace and at home.
- Learn how to sign up for community notifications.

Discussion:

The National Employment Standards require employees to notify their employer if they are in need of time off due to a family emergency. All employees are entitled to two days off to spend time with family. This time off is referred to as "Compassionate Leave".

If an employee becomes stranded at their place of employment during a storm, they are to be provided an area away from work activity, to be relieved of all work responsibility, and time of rest.

During a storm, follow the instructions from local officials pertaining to evacuation orders.

As always, stay safe out there!

