



WIND CHILL POLICY

The Montrose Community Schools follow the recommendations issued from the Mott Children's Center, the Center for Disease Control, as well as the guidelines from the National Weather Service, which advise schools to cancel when temperatures and wind speeds result in a **wind chill temperature of -19° F**. That temperature has been identified because it can result in frostbite within 30 minutes. The following additional information is also provided by the National Weather Service.

What is Wind Chill Temperature?

The wind chill temperature is how cold people and animals feel when outside. Wind chill is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by wind and cold. As the wind increases, it draws heat from the body, driving down skin temperature and eventually the internal body temperature. Therefore, the wind makes it feel much colder. If the temperature is 0 degrees Fahrenheit and the wind is blowing at 15 mph, the wind chill is -19 degrees Fahrenheit. At this wind chill temperature, exposed skin can freeze in 30 minutes.

What is Frostbite?

Frostbite occurs when body tissue freezes. The most susceptible parts of the body are fingers, toes, ear lobes, or the tip of the nose. Symptoms include a loss of feeling in the extremity and a white or pale appearance. Get medical attention immediately for frostbite. The area should be **SLOWLY** rewarmed.

What is Hypothermia?

Hypothermia occurs when body temperature falls below 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Warning signs include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and exhaustion. **Get medical attention immediately.** If you can't get help quickly, begin warming the body **SLOWLY**. Warm the body core first, **NOT** the extremities. Warming extremities first drives the cold blood to the heart and can cause the body temperature to drop further--which may lead to heart failure. Get the person into dry clothing and wrap in a warm blanket covering the head and neck. Do not give the person alcohol, drugs, coffee, or any HOT beverage or food. WARM broth and food is better. About 20% of cold related deaths occur in the home. Young children under the age of two and the elderly, those more than 60 years of age, are most susceptible to hypothermia. Hypothermia can set in over a period of time. Wear warm clothing, eat food for warmth, and drink plenty of water (or fluids other than alcohol) to keep hydrated.

Tips on How to Dress during Cold Weather

The best way to avoid hypothermia and frostbite is to stay warm and dry indoors. When required go outside, dress appropriately by wearing several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Trapped air between the layers will provide insulation. Remove layers to avoid sweating and subsequent chill. Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent, and hooded. Wear a hat because most body heat can be lost from the head. Cover the mouth to protect lungs from extreme cold. Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves. Try to stay dry and out of the wind.

Is it Possible to get Frostbite if the Temperature is Above Freezing but the Wind Chill is Below Freezing?

The air temperature has to be below freezing in order for frostbite to develop on exposed skin. Wind chill cannot bring the temperature to below freezing for humans and animals when the thermometer says it is above freezing. However, individuals might get hypothermia from exposure to cold. In summary, you can only get frostbite if the actual air temperature, not the wind chill temperature, near your skin is below freezing.