



# The Informed Worker



Driven By Higher Standards

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## WINTER TIPS FOR STAYING WARM WHILE WORKING OUTDOORS

The temperatures are dropping and workers and laborers of all kinds still work outside in the cold every day. Layering clothing is necessary during this time of year to stay warm and dry. In general, the rule of thumb for working in a cold environment is to get lots of insulation between you and the environment, and to remove that insulation layer by layer when you get warmer. You need a clothing system that allows you to shed layers quickly and easily before you get damp from perspiration. Why layering? Several lighter layers will keep you warmer than one very thick one. Air is trapped between each layer and warmed by your body, surrounding you with a self-generated heat shield that insulates you from the cold.

### First Layer:

Long Underwear – Long underwear should fit tightly against the body and be made of a wicking material to keep moisture away from your skin. Try synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene and stay away from cotton fabric because that holds water against your body.



### Mid Layer:

Mid layers are very important because they work to absorb the moisture out of your long underwear and evaporate it into the environment. Again, it is best to use synthetic fabric but wool is a great substitute. Pay close attention to the fit, as the mid layers work by trapping air and preventing it from circulating and carrying away your body heat. This layer will be your daily pants and shirt. Make sure they are not too baggy.



### Insulation Layer:

This layer will be a warm coat with several inches of loft or thickness. Thickness is warmth. Using a synthetic insulation is recommended for working in potential cold/wet conditions.



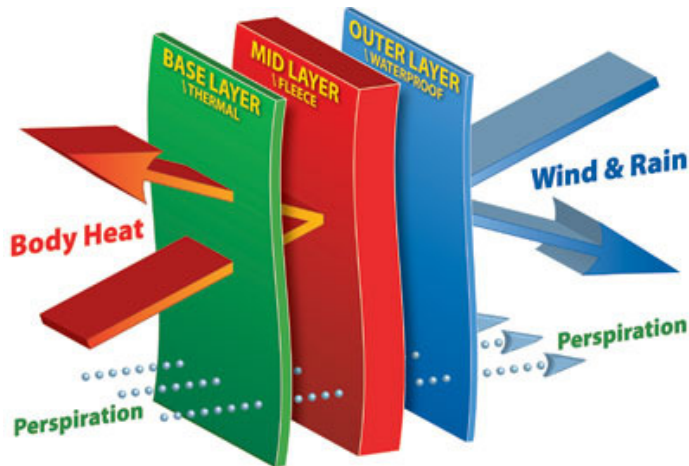
## Shell Layer

The most important layer other than the long underwear layer is this wind shell layer. Studies conducted by Recreational Equipment Co-Op show that in still air, wind shells worn over any garment can add up to 25 degrees of warmth. In windy conditions, wind shells can increase warmth by 50 degrees or more. Find a soft garment made of treated fabric that stop wind and water but have little or no insulation of their own. This is useful lightweight protection to pair with thick insulation layers.



## Other tips for staying warm while working outside:

- Hat or head band that covers the ears is key
- Hand and feet warmers
- Wool socks
- Wool lined gloves
- Stay hydrated
- Eat plenty of calories



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