
Thermal Standard for Workers Takes Significant Step for Performance and Protection

Newly Approved ANSI/ISEA 201-2012 Standard Sets Garment Guidelines for Workers in Cold-Weather Situations

ST. PAUL, Minn. March 9, 2012 (NAUMD) – Workers who are exposed to extreme cold-weather conditions often combat low temperatures with multiple layers and thick garments. And while this approach has acted as the informal industry norm, a new standard from the International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA) now makes it possible to apply more science to this challenge and help workers choose the right protection for their outdoor and cold environment occupational needs.

The newly approved standard – ANSI/ISEA 201-2012, *American National Standard for Classification of Insulating Apparel Used in Cold Work Environments*—establishes two classification requirements (1) for occupational apparel insulation performance in low temperatures and (2) based off the garments’ expected lifetime, laundry and work duty cycles. The guideline is a significant step for protecting those who work in extreme weather and is designed as a tool to assist garment selectors and specifiers in determining the appropriate workwear for their needs.

“Finally, a best practice guide is available for specifiers to make choices for compliant garments for their workers to be more comfortable and higher performing in harsh cold weather conditions. There are a million options to choose from out there, and it can be confusing,” said Dr. Tim Gardner, manager, Regulatory Affairs for 3M Performance Safety Materials Business. “The guide is a benchmark to enhance worker performance and promote safety, and 3M is your go-to resource.”

The ANSI/ISEA 201-2012 standard specifies that cold-weather garments be scientifically evaluated, classified, and labeled for their insulating properties. Test results are expressed in *clo*, or a garment’s intrinsic insulation value. One *clo* unit, for example, is the amount of insulation needed to maintain normal body temperature for a person sitting still in a 70° F room, or the approximate equivalent to a business suit.

While bulking up has been common practice for years, layers of heavy clothing can restrict movement and decrease worker dexterity, making it difficult to perform simple tasks. 3M™ Thinsulate™ Insulation, a leader in the science of warmth for more than 40 years, boasts a full product portfolio that can be used to meet ANSI/ISEA 201 standard requirements and provide exceptional warmth without bulk. 3M employees stand ready with the tools and expertise needed to help businesses determine the right ANSI/ISEA compliant options for their workers, ultimately helping to enhance warmth, increase productivity, and minimize on-the-job accidents.

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