

Temperature Extremes in Mining

Written by Scott Rentz, Dell West Superintendent

Wyoming, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Colorado have consistently **ranked in the top 10 states** for extreme temperatures over the years. That is four out of the five states that we have mining operations in. Extreme weather conditions can significantly increase stress levels in our environment, affecting both workers and the operations. High temperatures make it harder for the body to cool itself. Heat stress can cause fatigue, dehydration, irritability, reduced concentration, and impaired decision-making. Workers in hot, humid environments may have difficulty concentrating and may take unsafe shortcuts, increasing accident risk. To reduce heat-related stress, use heat monitoring, weather alerts, adequate hydration, cooling stations, and more frequent rest breaks. More information on mitigating the effects of high temperatures can be referenced in Lynn Mayer Shults' **Roxsand from July 31st.**



On the flip side, extreme cold weather can increase the risk of cold stress, hypothermia, and frostbite. There is greater fatigue as the body expends energy to maintain core temperature. The cold reduces concentration and alertness; reaction times are slower, along with impaired judgment. Psychological stress and irritability are higher during prolonged exposure to the cold. There are also more safety risks in the winter. Slips, trips, and falls due to snow and ice can quickly become an issue. As we approach the next few months and start to see colder weather, we should plan to wear layered clothing, provide areas around the plant as warming stations, monitor weather and wind chill conditions, and train workers to recognize cold stress symptoms.

I personally have loaded shots at the quarry in 30-below wind chill, as well as 110 heat index. Thinking back to 2013, we were loading our first shot of a new level at Dells West, and the heat took me to my knees. I quickly realized I needed to get to a cooler environment.

As well as a significant impact on our workforce, variable weather also affects our equipment, production plans, and throughput. At Dells West, if a piece of equipment does not have working AC, we cannot run it with the windows open due to silica exposure. So, in order to not overheat our employees, we have to take that equipment out of operation. We also have to take equipment out of operation when it is too cold to start and run them, decreasing productivity.

As each of our locations adapts to higher tonnages, adding more equipment to each plant to meet demands is continuous. The winter months seem to get compressed with more maintenance, in relatively the same amount of time. Our exposure to the winter weather can be prolonged to meet the deadlines and be more productive.

Anyone who has worked even a few years in the extreme weather conditions has said, *you would think I should be used to this by now*. We have many seasoned employees at our locations, but that statement does not hold up! Unpredictable weather keeps us on our toes. At LGE, we can face those surprises while still being safe, reliable, and productive. We need to stay vigilant and prepared as we monitor our teams to keep them safe, no matter what the conditions are.

Happy Birthday

Alex Hagen - Sioux Falls
Taylor Tracy - Ace Ready Mix

FinPath Update

Eligible company employees can utilize this great platform as a resource for financial planning - FinPath by HUB.

Nathan Bunkers - Dell Rapids East
Marek Betrus - West Farm Shop
Jacob Warner - West Farm Shop
Chris Schaffer - Dell Rapids East

Check your email for updates from HR about available features on the platform to better understand your paycheck, make the most of your benefits, or create healthy financial habits.



Ace Ready Mix Night Pour

The Ace Ready Mix team did an outstanding job at a recent large-scale overnight concrete pour for the Cliff Ave / I-229 bridge. Their operations required strong coordination and efficiency to deliver quality product. Our drivers demonstrated professionalism and commitment throughout the project. Backed by a dependable support team, the crew delivered an impressive result.

Company Store Reminder

As a reminder for employees - the discount code for the company store expires at the end of the year. It does not roll over into the following year. If you have any questions regarding the store, please email mjbarkley@lgeverist.com.

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