



Warm Window Cleaning Hands During Winter Months:

by  **J.Racenstein**
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Window cleaners often think first of working efficiently regardless of the circumstances. The

winter cleaning months create some unique cleaning conditions that require product choices that enable them to be efficient and warm.

The first area that you need to consider is that of keeping hands protected from the elements and the water in freezing temperatures. The importance of keeping your hands warm and dry enough to work effectively and safely is paramount to the window cleaner

working in winter conditions. Many of the gloves used for outdoor window cleaning are made to be waterproof while offering the utmost freedom of movement of fingers to cleaners.

Neoprene is a synthetic polymer resembling rubber that is resistant to oil, heat and weathering and is commonly used in many weather resistant products including gloves for window cleaning. Many window cleaners opt to use neoprene gloves without liners to give them the best dexterity for finger usage while cleaning, sacrificing the warmth of a liner.

Temperatures dictate which type of glove a cleaner will use. The usage of neoprene only

Safety & Window Cleaning in Cold Weather

by J. Racenstein, www.JRacenstein.com

For some, the foremost objective of cleaning in cold weather may be to clean effectively. But cleaning effectively should never mean sacrificing safety to accomplish a speedy completion of tasks.

Preventing hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration and other ailments cold weather can cause are all extremely important elements of “cleaning effectively” in winter conditions. The age-old adage that says “all injuries are preventable” can be applied accurately to cold weather injuries also. Aside from staying actively moving while working, eating properly, staying dry, getting plenty of rest and staying hydrated, it is also wise to take extraordinary precautions you normally would not consider while cleaning outdoors.

These include:

- Taking extra time to place ladders properly to prevent slipping on ice or snow.
- Being extra aware of how you are feeling and keeping a good eye on your co-worker(s) for signs of cold weather ailments.
- Taking more breaks than normal and seeking a warm place to do so.

- Immediately changing any clothing that becomes wet to prevent cold weather injury.
- Wearing sunglasses to help prevent snow blindness.
- Keeping exposed skin to minimum to help keep the body warm.

In the end, prior planning and education is the best course of action to be able to clean effectively in cold weather. Plan to drink plenty of water the day before. Get plenty of rest. Read to understand the symptoms of each ailment so you can prevent catastrophe.

“Cleaning effectively” in cold weather is to take all precautions for the well being of the cleaner while getting the job done simultaneously.



Photo courtesy of Tony Evans, A New View Window Cleaning, www.ANewViewIA.com

will suffice to temps down to about 20 degrees. Colder temps will necessitate utilizing a liner along with the neoprene.

Often gloves offer curved fingers to reduce fatigue and Velcro wrist straps to keep cold air and water from getting inside the glove. The grip a cleaner will have to grab tools while using gloves is important, thus many winter cleaning gloves offer a non-slip textured palm.

The second area that has to be considered is that of the water. When temps dip below 32 degrees, cleaners are forced to use methanol or other alcohols in their bucket to be able to continue to work outdoors. Not adding alcohol causes the water to freeze when placed on the glass. With the additive, window cleaners are able to get the water on the glass and back off again with a squeegee as they would at other times of the year.

The final area that needs addressing is the

clothing in general. Window cleaning requires range of motion, so often times big or bulky clothing will not allow for proper movement. You have to layer your clothing so that the cold temperatures don't affect your body temperature. Of course, as important as the outer clothing is proper footwear. Well-lined boots that provide protection from wet conditions are crucial.

So with the proper gloves, the right additive in the water and the proper clothing and footwear, one is ready to brave the elements and face the cold weather in winter months.

J Racenstein & Co. ("JRC") is a preeminent distributor of window washing supplies, tools and equipment in the U.S. JRC has been in the business for over 99 years and is nationally recognized as the comprehensive solution to the window washing cleaning industry. To learn more, visit www.jracenstein.com.



Seattle Window Cleaner's Gift Saves Daughter's Life

by Allison Hester, eClean Editor



Keith Sherman started with his own window cleaning company several years ago, merging and taking over Evergreen Window Cleaning in 2010.

On Halloween, Keith gave his (almost) three-year-old daughter, Evelyn, a very special treat – his kidney.

As a baby, Evelyn was diagnosed with “failure to thrive,” and later determined to have kidney disease. For the past two years, she has had to receive dialysis four times a week while doctors searched for a kidney donor. When Keith learned he was a match, the choice was simple. And so on Halloween morning, Keith donated his kidney to his young daughter – a surgery that may cost over \$500,000 and possibly put Keith out of commission for six weeks or more.

The surgery went well and Evelyn returned home on November 10. Both she and Keith are now recovering well. However, the financial burden remains.

The Shermans are working with the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) to raise funds and awareness for Evelyn's transplant. Fox Sports Grill in downtown Seattle has donated its space and appetizers for a fundraiser on December 16 where they are hoping to raise \$10,000. They are looking for about seven corporate/business sponsors to each donate \$100 to pay for the rest of the food for attendees.

If you are interested in helping sponsor the event, or in giving a tax-free donation to help with the Shermans' medical expenses, please visit Evelyn's website at cotaforevelyns.com.