

# National Weather Service To Unveil New Wind Chill Chart in November

This winter, folks who work and play outdoors will have a new way to judge how cold it feels, according to the National Weather Service.

Starting in November, NWS forecasters will use a new Wind Chill Temperature Index, designed to provide a more accurate reading of how the cold air feels on the human skin.

Since 1945, the United States and Canada have used an index that relied on observed winds 33 feet above the ground, and focused on how fast the temperatures—combined with winds—made water freeze. The new index uses the wind effects at face level, and an improved calculation for body heat loss.

For example, under the old index system, an air temperature of 20 degrees, with a 15-mph wind, translated into a reading of five degrees below zero. The new index calculation would translate the same conditions to six degrees above zero.

For a chart comparing the new system to the old one, visit <http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories/images/windchillfactor-new.jpg>

"Exposure to cold, biting air for long periods of time is dangerous," said Jack Kelly, director of the National Weather Service. "Our main goal was to use modern science in revising the index so that it's more accurate and makes the human impact more prominent."

## THE NEW INDEX

The new index will be based on:

Wind speed calculated at the average height of the human face, about five feet (the human face is most often exposed to the cold).

An updated heat transfer theory, which factors in heat loss from the body to its surroundings during cold, windy days.

A consistent standard for skin tissue resistance.

Clear night sky conditions.

A lowered calm wind threshold from four miles to three miles.

Kelly said, "This information will help people make sound decisions about how to dress for the weather."

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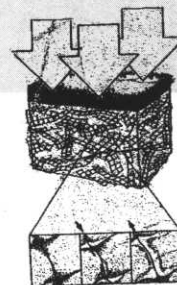
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