Environmental conditions refer to the various tangible or concrete hazards or difficulties that are in the vicinity of workers when completing critical tasks. Data elements provide a systematic means to describe surroundings or conditions experienced by workers as they perform critical tasks. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is identified for occupations that have exposure to hazardous contaminants; moving mechanical parts; heights; and loud noises. The duration of exposure workers have to these conditions are identified if exposure is not completely mitigated by PPE.

This document offers a general overview and basic descriptions of the environmental conditions that are collected and published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for the Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS).

**Environmental conditions covered:**

- Extreme cold 2
- Extreme heat 2
- Hazardous contaminants 2
- Heavy vibrations 3
- Heights 3
- Humidity 3
- Noise intensity level 4
- Outdoors 4
- Proximity to moving mechanical parts 5
- Wetness 5
Extreme cold
Exposure to non-weather related temperatures that are:
- 40 degrees or colder if the exposure is 2/3 or more of the workday
- 32 degrees or colder if the exposure is for less than 2/3 of the workday

Extreme heat
Exposure to non-weather related temperatures that exceed:
- 85 degrees in a humid atmosphere
- 90 degrees in a dry atmosphere

Hazardous contaminants
Exposure to a substance that negatively affects the respiratory system, eyes, skin or other living tissue via inhalation, ingestion, or contact.
**Heavy vibrations**
Exposure to a shaking object or surface that causes a strain on the body or extremities.

**Heights**
Exposure to possible bodily injury from falling.

**Humidity**
Non-weather related exposure to conditions where the air contains a high amount of water or water vapor and the atmosphere is oppressive.
**Noise intensity level**
The noise intensity level to which the worker is exposed in the job:

- **Quiet**
- **Moderate**
- **Loud**
- **Very loud**

**Outdoors**
Job requires work outdoors with workers unprotected and exposed to the elements. This does not include the commute to or from work.
Proximity to moving mechanical parts
Operation of or proximity to moving materials, mechanical parts, settings, or any moving objects (most commonly moving machinery or equipment) that could cause bodily harm.

Wetness
Any non-weather related contact with water or other liquids.