Guide to Cold Weather Concreting

Reported by ACI Committee 306

ACI 306R-16

American Concrete Institute
Always advancing

American Concrete Institute
Always advancing

First Printing
September 2016
ISBN: 978-1-945487-15-6

Guide to Cold Weather Concreting

The technical committees responsible for ACI committee reports and standards strive to avoid ambiguities, omissions, and errors in these documents. In spite of these efforts, the users of ACI documents occasionally find information or requirements that may be subject to more than one interpretation or may be incomplete or incorrect. Users who have suggestions for the improvement of ACI documents are requested to contact ACI via the errata website at http://concrete.org/Publications/DocumentErrata.aspx. Proper use of this document includes periodically checking for errata for the most up-to-date revisions.

ACI committee documents are intended for the use of individuals who are competent to evaluate the significance and limitations of its content and recommendations and who will accept responsibility for the application of the material it contains. Individuals who use this publication in any way assume all risk and accept total responsibility for the application and use of this information.

All information in this publication is provided “as is” without warranty of any kind, either express or implied, including but not limited to, the implied warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose or non-infringement.

ACI and its members disclaim liability for damages of any kind, including any special, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages, including without limitation, lost revenues or lost profits, which may result from the use of this publication.

It is the responsibility of the user of this document to establish health and safety practices appropriate to the specific circumstances involved with its use. ACI does not make any representations with regard to health and safety issues and the use of this document. The user must determine the applicability of all regulatory limitations before applying the document and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) health and safety standards.

Participation by governmental representatives in the work of the American Concrete Institute and in the development of Institute standards does not constitute governmental endorsement of ACI or the standards that it develops.

Order information: ACI documents are available in print, by download, on CD-ROM, through electronic subscription, or reprint and may be obtained by contacting ACI.

Most ACI standards and committee reports are gathered together in the annually revised ACI Manual of Concrete Practice (MCP).

American Concrete Institute
38800 Country Club Drive
Farmington Hills, MI 48331
Phone: +1.248.848.3700
Fax: +1.248.848.3701

www.concrete.org

ACI 306R-16

Guide to Cold Weather Concreting

Reported by ACI Committee 306

William J. Lyons III, Chair — Kevin A. MacDonald, Vice Chair — Erik Holck, Secretary

Kim D. Basham
James R. Baty II
Michael Patrick Berry
Charles D. Binkowski
Ken Cannella
Terry C. Collins
D. Gene Daniel
David J. Elmer
Mario Garza
John P. Gnaedinger
Robert J. Hoopes
Kenneth C. Hover
Eric D. King
Ronald L. Kozikowski Jr.
Steve R. Lloyd Sr.
Michael J. Marchese
Stephen C. Morrical
Craig M. Newtson
William D. Palmer Jr.
Dennis R. Purinton
Domenick Thomas Ruttura
Valery Tokar

Consulting Members

Terry L. Lavy
Robert J. Ryan
Harold B. Wenzel
Sixin Yang
Victor I. Subkov

This document guides specifiers, contractors, and concrete producers through the selection processes that identify methods for cold weather concreting. The objectives of cold weather concreting practices are to: a) prevent damage to concrete due to freezing at early ages; b) ensure that the concrete develops the recommended strength for safe removal of forms; c) maintain curing conditions that foster normal strength development; d) limit rapid temperature changes; and e) provide protection consistent with intended serviceability of the structure. Concrete placed during cold weather will develop sufficient strength and durability to satisfy intended service requirements when it is properly proportioned, produced, placed, and protected.

Keywords: accelerating admixtures; antifreeze admixtures; cold weather concreting; concrete temperature; curing; enclosures; form removal; freezing and thawing; heaters; heating aggregates; insulating materials; maturity testing; protection; strength development.

CONTENTS

ACI 306R-16 supersedes ACI 306R-10 and was adopted and published September 2016.

CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1—Introduction

The conditions of cold weather concreting exist when the air temperature has fallen to, or is expected to fall below, 40°F (4°C) during the protection period. The protection period is defined as the amount of time recommended to prevent concrete from being adversely affected by exposure to cold weather during construction. Concrete placed during cold weather will develop sufficient strength and durability to satisfy the intended service recommendations when it is properly proportioned, produced, placed, and protected. The necessary degree of protection increases as the ambient temperature decreases.

Take advantage of the opportunity provided by cold weather to place low-temperature concrete. Concrete placed during cold weather, protected against freezing, and properly cured for a sufficient length of time, has the potential to develop higher ultimate strength (Klieger 1958) and greater durability than concrete placed at higher temperatures. It is susceptible to less thermal cracking than similar concrete placed at higher temperatures.

Refer to ACI 306.1 for cold weather concreting requirements in a specification format. The Mandatory Items Checklist in ACI 306.1 can be used to add appropriate modifications to the contract documents.

This document guides the specifier, contractor, and concrete producer through the recommendations that identify methods for cold weather concreting.

1.2—Scope

This guide discusses general recommendations, concrete temperature during mixing and placing, temperature loss during delivery, preparation for cold weather concreting, protection requirements for concrete with or without construction supports, estimating strength development, methods of protection, curing recommendations, and admixtures for accelerating setting and strength gain including antifreeze admixtures.

The materials, processes, quality-control measures, and inspections described in this document should be tested, monitored, or performed as applicable only by individuals holding the appropriate ACI Certifications or equivalent.

CHAPTER 2—NOTATION AND DEFINITIONS

2.1—Notation

M = maturity factor, deg-h