



067: Personal Protective Equipment

PPE zones

Systematically assess the danger to each body zone so you get the right PPE: head, eyes, ears, nose/mouth/lungs, torso, arms, hands, legs, feet.

Common PPE

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Obtain a few pieces of PPE to demonstrate proper use.

What this Safety Talk covers:

Key points about personal protective equipment.

Discussion notes :

■ **Safety glasses.**

Wear safety glasses any time you are on the job site, other than in an office or trailer—flying particles don't care what time it is or what your job function is.

To avoid scratching the lenses, don't take the glasses on and off throughout the day. Store them in a glasses case or other protective container when not in use.

■ **Hardhat.**

Wear your hardhat any time you are on the job site, other than in an office or trailer. Your hardhat also helps identify you, thus improving security for everyone.

It provides some protection from falling objects, arcs, and objects your head might strike in close quarters. It protects you from impact only if you have not altered the suspension system by placing things between the suspension and the shell. Ensure your suspension isn't so loose it wobbles and not so tight it pinches your skin.

It is mechanically protective if you maintain the shell integrity. This means you cannot drill holes into it or alter the shell in any way. The solvents in paint can weaken the hat. Crystal clear acrylic spray may be acceptable, but get approval from your safety director before use.

It is electrically protective if you maintain insulating properties. The more you alter its surface, the less protection the hat provides. Ink, pencil marks, paint, and paper create conductive paths on the hat, so keep writing and stickers to a minimum.

■ **Earplugs.**

Wear hearing protection any place where you must raise your voice to talk. Hearing loss is permanent.

Damage to the inner ear often results in tinnitus, a maddening condition where you "hear" a constant buzz even when you are trying to sleep.

If using foam earplugs, replace them when they get dirty or lose their "sponginess." Roll them before inserting them—the expansion of the foam is what protects you. If these "slide right in," they won't protect you.

■ **Personal clothing.**

Wear sturdy shoes or boots, and long-sleeve shirts. Do not wear polyester. Do not wear tank-tops or shorts. Do not wear steel-shanked or steel-toed shoes when doing electrical work, unless the shoes are electrically qualified and so marked.

■ **Face shield.**

Wear a face shield whenever there is danger of debris hitting your face. This can be from grinding operations or arc flash, for example. Wearing safety glasses with a face shield adds an extra layer of protection.

Review and Discussion

Why do we use PPE?

What are the correct personal clothing choices?

When should you wear hardhat and safety glasses?

What are some important ways to ensure your hardhat protects you?

What are some important points about hearing protection?

■ Gloves and sleeves.

Work gloves provide mechanical protection to your hands. This is helpful during wire pulls, when carrying large objects, or when unpacking items such as light fixtures.

Insulated gloves provide electrical protection to your hands. Perform the roll-up test prior to use. Do not use these gloves without the protective outer glove.

Insulated sleeves extend the protection of gloves to your arms. If you are in a situation that requires gloves and sleeves, wear a face shield as well.

Other PPE

Mats. Standing on an insulated mat when testing live gear breaks the path from your feet to ground.

Blankets. Never stand on or walk on an electrical blanket. Use it to break the path from your body to ground or to provide an additional flash barrier.

Dust masks and respirators. Use these as directed to protect your respiratory system. Ensure a proper fit and seal before use. If you detect a failure of the device while in use, stop work and exit the area.

Extraction devices. These include wrist-mounted “come alongs” and other equipment designed to allow another person to pull you out. Have them securely in place before extraction becomes necessary. You may not have a second chance.

Goggles. Wear these when working with chemicals or in situations where safety glasses do not provide enough protection. You can wear safety glasses inside your goggles.

Hood and flash suit. If your task exposes you to arc blast potential, stay in your hood and suit until you leave the area. An arc blast vaporizes metal, and you can't see it coming.

Fall protection. If your task requires fall protection, do not remove the protection simply because your task has concluded or you are taking a break without coming down.

Demonstration

Have some crewmembers demonstrate how to use various PPE.

Participant's Signature and Date
