



7 Minute Safety Talks

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Understand that the proper PPE and clothing can protect from hazards on the job.
- Realize the importance of selecting it according to the hazards, getting a proper fit, and inspecting it before each use.

TALKING POINTS

- 1. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to “assess the workplace” to see if there are hazards that require protective clothing or other personal protective equipment (PPE).**
 - If the assessment identifies hazards, employers must select, and have each employee use the type of PPE needed to protect from those hazards.
 - Employers must select PPE that fits each affected employee properly.
 - Employers are required to provide training so employees will know:
 - When PPE is necessary;
 - What PPE is necessary;
 - How to properly put on, take off, adjust, and wear PPE;
 - The proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of the PPE.
- 2. The clothing you wear for work can protect you or be an added hazard depending on the job you have been assigned to do. For example:**
 - Gloves can protect your hands when you are working with strong chemicals, but gloves can get caught in moving parts when are working with machinery.
 - Even if special clothing is not required for a job, the right choices can help to protect you.
 - Long-sleeved shirts can protect you from insects and sunburn when you are working outside.
 - Pants should not have cuffs or be rolled up because they could get caught on equipment or catch sparks or chemicals.
 - Shoes with nonskid soles can save you from falls on wet surfaces.
 - Avoid loose clothing or jewelry that could get caught in machinery.
 - Jewelry could also act as a conductor of electricity.
- 3. Some on-the-job hazards are physical hazards, such as heat, cold, electricity, sharp objects, or falling objects.**
 - Fire-resistant fabrics or leather will protect against fire and heat.
 - Heavy cotton clothing will provide protection against abrasions, splinters or cuts.
 - Insulated clothing will offer protection against cold.
 - Safety footwear should be sturdy, with thick soles and impact-resistant toes.
 - Safety helmets or hard hats are necessary to provide protection from falling objects – some are especially designed to protect against electricity as well.
- 4. In addition, there are health hazards from exposure to toxic or corrosive chemicals.**
 - Many of these substances are so hazardous that they require full-body chemical-resistant suits.
 - Because the hazards vary widely from one chemical to another, it is necessary to check the safety data sheet (SDS) to find the proper protection.
 - It is very important to remove chemical-protective clothing to avoid contaminating yourself.
 - Remove contaminated clothing only in the designated changing area.
 - Don't touch any part of the contaminated clothing without gloves.
 - Remove clothing from the top down so contaminants from the jacket or apron don't touch your uncovered legs.
 - Always wear gloves as you unfasten zippers, snaps, etc.



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5. Before you wear any PPE or clothing:

- Inspect it for cuts, tears, punctures, stiffness, and discoloration.
- Make sure it fits properly. It should be comfortable and not so loose or tight that it is difficult to do your job properly.
- Make sure all snaps, zippers, etc., are fastened securely.

DISCUSSION

Which of the precautions discussed in this meeting are particularly important on this site? Are there other hazards that were not addressed?

CONCLUSION

There are many different potential sources of danger in any workplace. Following safety rules will help you avoid most of them, but concentrating on your job and avoiding shortcuts are probably the best rules of all.