

News & Notes

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) - LAST STEP IN THE HIERARCHY OF HAZARDS

Personal protective equipment may be a very effective way to protect employees, but it should never be seen as a first line of protection. PPE is actually the "last line of defense" in the hierarchy of hazards. The hierarchy of hazards is a proven safety approach that helps protect employees. The hierarchy goes as follows:

- **Eliminate** - When possible, eliminate the hazard completely so employees are not exposed to a specific danger.
- **Substitute** - Remove one hazard and replace it with one that is safer. For example, removing an outdated machine with few safety features and replacing it with a new model that is much less risky.
- **Controls** - Engineering controls to minimize danger can be very effective. This is essentially just containing a risk so employees and the facility are as safe as possible. For example, having any high heat processes conducted in a smaller, fire protected, room will confine any risk to this one area.
- **Administrative Controls** - Using rules and regulations to reduce the risk. Telling employees they must follow a set process when working on a machine will reduce the overall risk.
- **Personal Protective Equipment** - Using personal protective equipment is only a last resort. It is there to protect employees in case all the other options should fail.

While personal protective equipment may be the last option when it comes to keeping employees safe, it is still extremely important. PPE can reduce the risk of injury and in many cases can minimize the effect of any accident that does take place. This is why using PPE just makes sense!!



"They need to come up with an app that will locate your glasses."

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

- 1) The clerk at the butcher shop is five feet ten inches tall and wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?
- 2) If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you haven't got me. What am I?

Answers on page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Matters



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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is any type of clothing or equipment worn by a person to protect them from some specific hazard. Typically this is protection from any physical, radiological, electrical, chemical, biological, mechanical, or other threat at work, home or recreation.

Types of Personal Protective Equipment

Workplaces are responsible for providing their employees with the proper types of personal protective equipment based on the specific hazards that exist in the facility. There are many types of PPE available to help keep people safe. The following are some categories of personal protective equipment and the options within them.

Skin & Body Protection Equipment

Many chemicals and other materials can cause serious injuries or illnesses when they come in contact with the skin. When working with these hazards, having proper personal protective equipment is extremely important.

- **Protective Clothing** - The most common type of skin protection equipment is general protective clothing. Something as simple as a lab coat helps reduce the risk of getting splashed with potentially hazardous solutions. While it isn't a high level of protection, it is sufficient for many situations.
- **Plastic Gloves** - Plastic (or latex) gloves are among the most common types of skin protection equipment. They can keep a wide range of hazards away, including biological and chemical solutions.
- **Cut-Resistant Gloves** - Employees who work with sharp objects should wear cut-resistant gloves. These gloves are made of special materials that prevent blades from slicing through them.
- **Heat-Resistant Clothing** - When working with fire or other high temperature hazards, employees should wear heat-resistant clothing. This could be heat-resistant gloves or it could be an entire suit, depending on the situation.
- **Electricity-Resistant Clothing** - When working with or around high voltage areas, having PPE that can reduce the risk of electrical shock is essential. This could be rubber boots, gloves, or an entire body suit.
- **Face Shields** - Face shields reduce the risk of having something splash up into the face, causing damage. Whether working with hot items, corrosive materials, or biological materials, face shields can protect one of the most vulnerable parts of the body.
- **Hard Hats** - Hard hats are a great way to protect someone's head when working in an area where something could fall on them.

Eye Protection

Protecting the eyes is extremely important because even a minor accident can cause long-term eye damage or even blindness. Here are several of the most common types of eye protection equipment:

- **Goggles** - Simple safety goggles provide a strong layer of protection to the eyes. This is good for preventing objects from flying into the eyes such as sawdust, stones, and shards of glass.
- **Welding Masks** - While welding masks sometimes cover the entire face, their main function is to protect the eyes from the extremely bright light of a torch. These masks are darkened significantly to prevent the light from reaching and damaging the eyes.
- **Sunglasses** - This is a simple type of PPE that most people never give a second thought. If you're regularly working in the sun or around bright lights, wearing sunglasses can help prevent many eye conditions that might develop due to excessive exposure.

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Safety Bits & Pieces

10 SAFE DRIVING TIPS

Remember these driving tips to avoid "A Sudden Change in Plans" and perhaps save a life including your own!

1) Stay Alert and Minimize Distractions

- Dedicate your full attention to the roadway
- Avoid changing the radio station, using a mobile phone, eating, or other distractions that can remove your concentration from the road

2) Keep Your Headlights On

3) Pay Attention to the Road

- "Listen to the signs" by doing what they say
- Watch brake lights on vehicles ahead
- Watch traffic around you and be prepared to react

4) Merge into the Proper Lane

- Merge well before you reach the lane closure
- Be aware that traffic patterns can change daily

5) Don't tailgate

- Follow other vehicles at a safe distance

6) Obey the Posted

Speed Limit

- Road construction workers may be present just feet away
- Fines may be doubled for moving traffic violations
- Be prepared to slow down further or stop if conditions indicate the need

7) Change Lanes Safely

- Change lanes only where pavement markings indicate, and only when traffic conditions permit

8) Follow Instructions from Flaggers

9) Expect the Unexpected

- Workers, work vehicles, or equipment may enter your lane without warning
- Other vehicles may slow, stop, or change lanes unexpectedly

10) Be Patient

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

- 1) Meat, of course!
- 2) A secret!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



"He's not the elephant in the room. He's the elephant that never forgets all the computer passwords."

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

(continued from page 1)

Hearing Protection

Protecting the hearing of employees is very important, but can be difficult. Many people don't notice when they are working around the constant noise of a factory or other workplace. While it may not be something people realize is happening, this can cause significant permanent damage to the hearing over time. Remember, long-term exposure to 80-85 decibels or more without protection can cause hearing loss. It is not recommended to be exposed to 100 decibels without any protection for more than 15 minutes. Here are some decibel levels of common sounds:

Aircraft takeoff: 180

Chainsaw: 110

Amplified music: 110

Lawnmower: 90

Normal conversation: 60

Wearing personal protective equipment for the ears is critical.

- **Ear Plugs** - Ear plugs are easy to use and provide a fair amount of protection by preventing loud noises from entering the ear at all.

- **Ear Muffs** - Ear muffs go over the entire ear, and when worn properly, can provide a significant amount of noise reduction.

- **Electronic Ear Muffs** - These advanced hearing protection devices work like ear muffs to stop the noise from coming in, but also have an electronic microphone that picks up voices and other noises and then plays them into the ear so people can still hear. The sounds are played at a low level so they do not cause damage.

Breathing Protection | Respirators

Respirators are a type of personal protective equipment designed specifically to protect the lungs of the people wearing them. They can help filter out dust, debris, chemicals, and many other potential dangers. There are many types of respirators used for PPE, including:

- **Basic Facemask** - A facemask can minimize the risk of exposure to simple biological contaminants, dust, debris, and other harmful impurities in the air. In a pinch, even a simple handkerchief could serve as a facemask (though not recommended for regular use).

- **Filtered Respirator** - If there are known impurities that can cause serious damage or illness, having a filter on the respirator is important. There are many types of filtered respirators available depending on how many impurities need to be removed.

- **Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus** - In situations where the air is extremely toxic, a self-contained breathing apparatus allows the employee to bring a supply of fresh air with them. This is also used when there is no oxygen to breath, such as under water.

There are different types of personal protective equipment for just about every situation. Figuring out what type is needed in a facility is a matter of evaluating the risks and determining what PPE can offer the needed protection.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

August is designated as Back-to-School Safety Month. Remember these Back-to-School Safety Tips:

- 1) Plan a walking route to school or the bus stop. Choose the most direct way with the fewest street crossings and, if possible, with intersections with crossing guards.
- 2) Teach your children - whether walking, biking or riding the bus to school - to obey all traffic signals, signs and traffic officers. Remind them to be extra careful in bad weather.
- 3) When driving children, deliver and pick them up as close to the school as possible. Don't leave until they are in the school yard or school building.
- 4) Be sure your child walks to and from school with a sibling, friend or neighbor.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"When we cannot bear to be alone, it means we do not properly value the only companion we will have from birth to death --- ourselves."

Eda LeShan

American writer (1922 - 2002)

