Glove Selection and Use Meeting Kit

Exposure to sharp objects, thorns, poisonous plants, hot objects and chemicals can cause damage to skin tissue. Gloves can protect hands and forearms from cuts, abrasions, burns, puncture wounds, bites, skin contact with hazardous chemicals and some electrical shocks.

GLOVE SELECTION AND USE: 5 FACTORS

1. Choosing Protective Gloves

It is important to choose the type of glove that will offer the most protection from the hazards present on the job.

- Fabric gloves can absorb liquids, including dangerous chemicals.
- Nitrile and latex gloves offer little heat protection and may be flammable if exposed to high temperatures. These types of gloves do not provide adequate protection from fire or other heat sources.
- Never wear gloves of any type while working on or around moving machinery parts such as rotating shafts, belts, pulleys and similar sliding or rotating movements. Gloves can get caught in machinery.

2. The Proper Fit

Gloves that are too tight may restrict movement and cut off circulation to the fingers. Gloves that are too large may make work very cumbersome and difficult especially when small objects requiring increased dexterity are involved.

3. Type Of Glove and Level Of Protection

Metal Mesh and Kevlar Knit

- Protects against cuts from sharp objects.

- Used for pruning and grafting, and cutting with knives.

Leather

- Protects against rough objects, abrasion, sparks and moderate heat.
- Used for general chores, construction activities, tree work and fence maintenance/installation.

Fabric and Coated Fabric

- Protects against dirt, splinters and abrasions.
- Helps grip slippery or smooth objects.
- For general chores such as raking, shoveling, hoeing and weeding.
- Do not use when working with rough, sharp or heavy objects.

Rubber, Neoprene, Vinyl, Nitrile, Latex

- Protects against chemical, fluid and pathogen exposure.
- Check chemical packaging for specific instructions.
- Used for pesticide application, painting/staining, and livestock care and medications.

4. Proper Care

Inspect gloves before each use to make sure they are not torn or punctured. Whether they can be reused or discarded depends largely on the work they are being used for and the desired protection. Reuse of gloves used to handle chemicals should be carefully considered and depends on the toxicity of the chemical and manufacturer’s recommendations.

5. Criteria when Choosing the Right Glove for the Job

- the type of chemicals to be handled
- frequency and duration of chemical contact
- nature of contact (total immersion or splash only)
- concentration of chemicals
- temperature of chemicals
- abrasion/resistance requirements
- puncture-, snag-, tear-, and cut-resistance requirements

- length to be protected (hand only, forearm, arm)
- dexterity requirements
- grip requirements (dry grip, wet grip, oily)
- cuff edge (safety cuff, knit wrist, or gauntlet)
- color requirements (to show contamination)
- thermal protection (ie. handling anhydrous ammonia)
- size and comfort requirement

FINAL WORD

Protective gloves tend to be less effective than other control measures but if avoiding contact is impractical or is not enough to protect employees then gloves may be needed. Your fingers and hands cannot be replaced. Glove protection for your most valuable asset is critical. It’s essential to choose the correct gloves for the task. There are many types to choose from and using the correct type will go a long way to prevent injury or worse.