Personal Protective Equipment – Dressed for Protection Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

In the hierarchy of risk control, PPE is considered to rank lowest and represent the option of last resort. It is only appropriate where the hazard in question cannot be totally removed or controlled in such a way that harm is unlikely.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

DANGERS OF EMPLOYEE REFUSAL TO WEAR PPE

An employee's refusal to wear PPE may be cause for discipline, particularly if the refusal creates a risk of infection for other employees at the workplace. Each case should be considered on its own facts and with a view to the individual employee's situation.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

BASIC TYPES OF PPE. A hazard assessment can identify which specialized PPE will be required.

1. Face and Eye Protection. PPE includes safety goggles, face shields and should be used for tasks that can cause eye damage. **Safety Tips:**

- Check if safety glasses comply with the ANSI Z87.1 eye protection standard.
- Ensure that there are no cracks or deformities on the lenses.
- Ensure the strap is in good working condition and is firmly sealed to the cheek and forehead.
- Clean and disinfect after use.

2. Respiratory Protection. PPE includes full-face respirators, self-contained breathing apparatus, gas masks, N95 respirators, and surgical masks are used for a task that can cause inhalation of harmful materials to enter the body. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure that the equipment is fit-tested, and employee has undergone proper training before wearing one.
- Read the instructions to determine if it is designed to help protect against the hazards you may face.
- Change filters on half-mask or full-mask respirators frequently.
- Replace disposable respirators with every use.
- Surgical masks are not to be shared with anyone.
- Avoid touching the surgical mask after wearing it.
- Change surgical mask timely and should be disposed of after use.
- Replace the mask immediately if it is damaged or soiled.

3. Head Protection. PPE includes hard hats and headgears and should be required for tasks that can cause any force or object falling to the head. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure that there are no dents or deformities on the shell and connections are tightened inside.
- Do not store in direct sunlight as extreme heat can cause damage.
- Choose appropriate cleaning agents as it can weaken the shells of hard hats and may eliminate electrical resistance.
- Always replace a hard hat if it was used for any kind of impact, even if the damage is unnoticeable.

4. Body Protection. PPE includes safety vests and suits that can be used for tasks that can cause body injuries from extreme temperatures, flames and sparks, toxic chemicals, insect bites and radiation. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure that they are clean and free from cuts and burns.
- Always get a good fit to ensure full body protection.
- Ensure bodysuit is heat-resistant clothing when working with high-temperature hazards.

5. Hands Protection. PPE includes safety gloves and should be used for tasks that can cause hand and skin burns, absorption of harmful substances, cuts, fractures, or amputations. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure hand protection fits perfectly with no spaces and is free from cuts, burns and chemical residue.
- Always replace them if any sign of contamination was observed.
- Use rubber gloves when working with heat and electricity to reduce the risk of burn or electrical shock.

6. Foot Protection. PPE includes knee pads and safety boots and should be used for tasks that can cause serious foot and leg injuries from falling or rolling objects, hot substances, electrical hazards, and slippery surfaces. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure boots have slip-resistant soles that can protect against compression and impact.
- Ensure the sole plate is in good condition to prevent punctures.

7. Fall Protection. PPE safety harnesses and lanyards used for tasks that cause falls from heights and serious injury or death. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure that the straps are free from tears, deformities and burn marks.
- Check the buckles if connected securely and tightly.
- Dispose of the equipment if used after a falling incident.
- PPE – Skin and Body Protection

8. Hearing Protection. PPE includes ear muffs and plugs and used for tasks that can cause hearing problems and loss of hearing. **Safety Tips:**

- Ensure the equipment fit the ear canal perfectly.
- It is recommended to use formable earplugs to fit on different sizes of ear canals.
- Use protectors that reduce noise to an acceptable level to have a room for communication.

FINAL WORD

Dressed for protection really means “dressed for the occasion!!!” The type of environment whether office or industrial or manufacturing environment will dictate what kind of PPE workers require.