# Personal Protective Equipment – Dressed for Protection Stats and Facts

## FACTS

1. **Head**. Wearing a safety helmet or hard hat is one of the easiest ways to protect your head from injury. Hard hats must resist penetration by objects, absorb the shock of a blow, be water and fire resistant, and fit properly. It is critical that protective headgear fit properly, or it may not protect you.
2. **Eyes**. While specific PPE may vary according to task and employer, all eye and face protection should guard against the potential hazard. It should also be comfortable and fit properly, provide unrestricted vision and movement, and allow unrestricted functioning of other required PPE.
3. **Ears**. There are many types and styles of hearing protection, each engineered to block or absorb high and low frequency noise. There are three basic types of hearing protection commonly available: ear inserts, ear muffs and canal caps.
4. **Hands**. Wear gloves to protect your hands against germs, splinters and slivers, punctures and cuts, and hot and cold surfaces.
5. **Feet**. Protective footwear guards against two major categories of injury. The first includes injury to the foot itself from punctures, crushing, cuts, burns, and sprains. The second category includes injuries to other parts of the body resulting from slips, trips, or falls.

## STATS

- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in one period of observation, hard hats were worn by only 16% of workers who sustained head injuries, although 2/5ths were

required to wear them for certain tasks at specific locations. Only 1% of approximately 770 workers who suffered face injuries were wearing face protection. 23% of the workers with foot injuries wore safety shoes or boots. About 40% of the workers with eye injuries wore eye protective equipment. A majority of these workers were injured while performing their normal jobs at regular worksites.

- About 60% of workers use PPE during work. Main reasons for non-use are discomfort, lack of knowledge on how to use it and poor fit. Occupational accidents in the last 12 months were reported by 64.3% of workers. The main accident types were being hit by falling objects, falls from height, and tool related accidents.
- Each day, an estimated 2,000 workers suffer eye injuries on the job, which not only robs many of them of their sight, but also costs employers and insurance companies millions of dollars a year. These injuries incur more than $924 million annually in workers’ compensation, and nearly $4 billion in wage and productivity losses, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).