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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

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What is PPE?

Personal protective equipment, often referred to as PPE, is sometimes given little thought throughout the workday. Employees often neglect this equipment that is made to reduce their exposure to workplace hazards, injuries, and illnesses. PPE includes items such as gloves, safety glasses, boots, earplugs or muffs, hard hats, respirators, fall protection, high-vis vests, and more. These items of PPE can reduce injuries or illnesses when coming in contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other workplace hazards.

As the outage quickly approaches there is a need to remind employees the importance of PPE. Some areas may be quiet with the Unit being down, but that doesn't mean there won't be loud noises, flying debris, or other hazards that employees may be exposed to in their work areas. Everyone should be mindful of the work going on and prepare for any hazards that may be encountered. This could be as simple as remembering a few pairs of extra earplugs or taking a respirator along.

Employers are required to provide PPE to their employees and ensure that employees are trained on PPE use. As an employee, you are enrolled in a PPE training program and must complete several modules and hands-on practicals each year. This training includes:

- When PPE should be used.
- What types of PPE are available and its limitations.
- How to wear, adjust, and remove the PPE.
- The proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of PPE.

As an employee, it is your responsibility to wear the PPE you are provided and to wear it correctly. This means if you are assigned a task and required to wear a respirator, you should be clean-shaven to enable a good seal of the mask to your face. Employees are also responsible for routinely inspecting PPE equipment and notifying his/her supervisor if it is defective or damaged. PPE should be cleaned and cared for by the employee and disposable items should be discarded when they become soiled. There are four steps that all employees should follow when it comes to PPE:

- Wear it properly.
- Care for it.
- Clean it.
- Maintain it.

These four steps will help to ensure your safety by making sure your PPE is in good condition and ready for use every day.

Remember, we can improve our safety by wearing PPE correctly. If you have any questions or problems with your PPE, please speak with your supervisor or visit with Safety. There are many PPE options available for employees and your PPE should fit and feel comfortable when worn. Be safe this outage and remember your PPE.

