

February 2020

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Choosing the Correct PPE

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Supervising Safety Newsletter

Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE, is defined as any type of clothing or equipment designed to protect a person from risks of illness or injury. These safety products include respirators, hearing protection devices, safety helmets, eye and face protection, safety boots, and gloves. PPE clothing, such as insulated jackets, weatherproof coats, and high-visibility vests, are also considered PPE.

OSHA requires employers to provide protection from hazards that may cause injury or illness to their workers while on the job. This is done by using engineering or work practice systems to control or eliminate work hazards to the highest extent possible. Using protective equipment is another safety tool to help guard employees against workplace dangers.

Selecting the best PPE for a job is a crucial task. Ample knowledge of the different types of PPE products, features, and limitations are needed to be able to make an informed decision.

The following are seven things to remember when choosing the right Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Match PPE to Hazard

Some jobs only need one kind of PPE for the tasks at hand. However, some workers are exposed to more than one kind of hazard due to the nature of their work. For example, a welder needs protection from molten metal, harmful light rays, welding gases, and flying chips. In this case, more than one kind of PPE is needed – welder's goggles, a welding helmet, a respirator or an air-supplied welding hood, are examples of these.

Evaluate the Available PPE

Receive and give feedback when selecting the best PPE that will be used. This way an individual can get vital information on the fit, comfort, and if the level of protection offered is substantial enough. Buy-in by employees is essential if the PPE is going to be properly used.

Consider Ergonomics

A PPE that has a poor fit or is unnecessarily heavy will most likely not be used. PPE that is also uncomfortable will not be worn as often as required. Make sure the PPE device selected will not only meet standards, but will be comfortable to wear.

Review Standards

Go over the standards of performance requirements to make sure that exposure to injury will be lessened or eliminated by using a particular PPE. PPE that is exposed to hazards that it is not designed for will not provide adequate protection to the user.

Check the fit

Fit is an important factor when judging how usable PPE is. PPE must fit each individual worker properly.

Get Some Advice

Base your PPE selection on thorough hazard evaluation and types of PPE available

Wear it

PPE only works if it is used and used properly.

As an employer, IPSC is required to provide PPE for its employees, but as an employee it is essential for our safety that PPE practices are being followed. Stand up for safety. Gentle reminders and simple words of encouragement will help us remember to use and wear our PPE when required.

