

Personal Protective Equipment

General Information

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is gear that can be worn to help minimize or eliminate injury. It can be worn to help prevent sudden injuries (bumps, falls, pinches, etc.) or injuries that occur over time (lower-back injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome, etc.).

It is very important the user understands the intended purpose of the PPE and verifies that it fits properly.

Types of PPE

There are many types of PPE developed for various hazards and industries. PPE will not be fully effective unless it fits properly and is worn correctly. The type of PPE will depend on the area of the body at risk and the type of hazard (e.g., projectile, heat, chemical exposure, fumes, elevations, confined space, etc.).

Area of Body

Types of PPE

Eyes/face

Safety goggles and glasses, weld masks, face shields

Ears

Earmuffs, ear plugs

Respiratory system

Respirators, Nuisance (dust) masks, ventilated hoods

Head

Protective helmets, bump caps, hairnets

Torso/back

Fall restraints, reflective vests, aprons, back braces

Hands/arms

Heavy-duty work gloves, rubber (latex) gloves, protective sleeves, wrist supports

Feet/legs

Steel-toed footwear, metatarsal covers, chaps

A few points to consider

- What type of PPE do you wear for the various tasks you perform?
- Does it fit properly and is it in good working condition?
- What can be done in your work area to improve the use of PPE?

Discussion Notes: