Personal protective equipment (PPE) toolbox talk

29 CFR 1910.132, 1926.102, 1926.95, 1926.28

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

What piece of PPE are you most tempted to skip on a hot day, and why?

Why it matters

PPE is the gear you wear to protect your body from a hazard, like hard hats, safety glasses, hearing protection, gloves and safety-toe boots. It is the last line of defense, after the hazard has been removed or controlled as far as possible. PPE only works when it is the right gear for the hazard, fits, is in good shape and is actually worn. Gear left in the truck protects nobody.

Key points

1 The hazard decides the PPE

Under the general industry rule, the employer must assess the workplace for hazards that call for PPE. The employer then selects PPE that protects against those hazards and properly fits each worker, and tells each affected worker what was selected. On construction sites, the employer must require appropriate PPE wherever workers are exposed to hazardous conditions (29 CFR 1926.28(a)). Your part is to wear what the task calls for, every time the hazard is there.

29 CFR 1910.132(d)(1)

2 Match the gear to the hazard

Each piece of PPE is matched to a hazard: hard hats for falling objects, safety glasses or goggles for flying chips and dust, hearing protection for noise, the right gloves for cuts, burns or chemicals, and safety-toe boots for crushed toes. When flying objects are a hazard, eye protection must have side protection, and clip-on or slide-on side shields that meet the rule are acceptable. Regular prescription glasses are not safety glasses.

29 CFR 1926.102(a)(2)

3 It has to fit you

PPE must be selected so it properly fits each worker who uses it. Glasses that slide down your nose, gloves that are too big, or a hard hat that falls off when you bend over cannot protect you the way they should. If your gear does not fit, say so and get the right size.

29 CFR 1926.95(c)(2)

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4 Check it before you use it

Look over your PPE before each use. Check hard hats for cracks and a worn suspension, glasses for cracks and deep scratches, gloves for holes and tears, and boots for damage. Defective or damaged PPE must not be used, so turn it in and get a replacement.

29 CFR 1910.132(e)

5 Know how to wear it and what it cannot do

Under the general industry rule, workers who are required to use PPE must be trained in when it is needed, which PPE is needed, how to put it on, take it off, adjust and wear it, its limits, and how to care for it. Every piece of PPE has limits: regular safety glasses do not seal out a chemical splash, and leather gloves are not chemical gloves. Clean your gear, store it away from sun, heat and dirt, and replace it when it wears out.

29 CFR 1910.132(f)(1)

6 Your employer pays for required PPE

PPE used to comply with the OSHA construction rules must be provided by the employer at no cost to you. The general industry rules say the same (29 CFR 1910.132(h)(1)). Both rules list a few exceptions, so ask your supervisor if you are not sure what is covered. If your PPE wears out or gets damaged on the job, report it and ask for a replacement.

29 CFR 1926.95(d)(1)

Scenario

Picture this: a new helper is cutting pavers with a cut-off saw on a hot afternoon. His safety glasses keep fogging, so he pushes them up onto his hard hat. His gloves are too big, so he takes them off and keeps cutting. The job is almost done and nobody says anything. What should the crew do right now, and what should change before tomorrow?

Crew discussion

1. What PPE does each of your tasks today call for, and why?
2. Which piece of your PPE does not fit right or gets in your way, and what would fix it?
3. What do you check on your PPE before you put it on?
4. Where do we keep spare PPE, and who do you ask when yours is damaged?

Bottom line **Wear the right PPE for the hazard, make sure it fits and is in good shape, and speak up when it is not.**

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Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema: Personal protective equipment (PPE) / Equipo de protección personal (EPP)

Date / Fecha: _____

Trainer / Instructor: _____ Location / Lugar: _____ Company / Empresa: _____

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