Sunscreen safety moment: a sun protection toolbox talk

29 CFR 1926.102, 1926.51, 1926.21, 1926.50, 1926.20

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

When was the last time you put on sunscreen at work, and when did you last reapply it?

Why it matters

Working outdoors means being in the sun for hours, day after day. Sunburn hurts, but the bigger problem is that sun damage adds up over a career. Skin cancer is a real risk for outdoor workers. A few simple habits protect your skin, your eyes and your health for the long run.

Key points

1. **Use sunscreen, and use enough**
   Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a high protection rating. Put it on before you start work, and cover your face, ears, neck, arms and the backs of your hands. Reapply during the day, especially when you sweat. Follow the label.

2. **Cover up with clothing**
   Long sleeves and long pants in a light, loose, tightly woven fabric block sun and keep you cooler than you might think. A wide-brimmed hat or a hard hat with a brim or neck flap protects your face and neck. Wear clothing that fits the job, and keep it clear of moving parts.

3. **Protect your eyes**
   Wear sunglasses that block ultraviolet light, or use safety glasses with that protection. Eyes can be damaged by sun and glare. Where flying particles are a hazard, use eye protection that is rated for that hazard.
   29 CFR 1926.102(a)(1)

4. **Find shade and time the hard work**
   Take breaks in the shade or a cool place. When you can, schedule the hardest outdoor tasks for the cooler parts of the day. The sun is strongest in the middle of the day, even when it is cloudy. A tent or a canopy for the crew is worth it.

ToolboxKits by ALC Media LLC. Not affiliated with OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. Not legal advice.

5 Drink water and watch for heat illness

Sun and heat go together. Drink water often. An adequate supply of drinking water must be provided at the construction workplace. Watch for dizziness, headache and nausea in yourself and coworkers, and act early.

29 CFR 1926.51(a)(1)

6 Check your skin and treat a burn

Look for new spots or moles, or ones that change in size, shape or color, and see a doctor if you notice them. For a sunburn, get out of the sun, cool the skin, drink water and avoid breaking blisters. See a medical provider for a severe burn.

Scenario

Picture this: A landscaping crew works all day in open sun. One worker skips sunscreen because he put some on at home hours ago. Another wears a tank top and no hat. By noon, one has a red, painful burn on his neck and arms, and feels dizzy and nauseous. His coworker says to just push through. What would you do for him, and what should the crew do tomorrow?

Crew discussion

1. What sun protection do you use at work now, and what is missing?
2. Where is the shade, and how can we make more of it?
3. Have you ever had a bad sunburn? What did you learn?
4. How can we remind each other to reapply sunscreen?

Bottom line **Sunscreen, clothing, shade and water protect you today and long after this job is done.**

Free to share and adapt for non-commercial use under the CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license (creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0). Credit: ToolboxKits, toolboxkits.com/topics/sun-protection/

Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema Sun protection / Protección contra el sol

Date / Fecha _____

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

#	Name Nombre	Signature Firma	Company Empresa	Date Fecha
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Trainer signature / Firma del instructor _____ Time / Hora _____

ToolboxKits by ALC Media LLC. Not affiliated with OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. Not legal advice.