Personal Protective Equipment (Head)

Safety Meeting Packet

Head injuries are among the most dangerous injuries an employee can suffer. In some cases, these types of injuries can prove to be fatal. The use of hard hats and understanding the various types, common worksite hazards, and proper maintenance procedures for hard hats can go a long way in preventing such injuries.

Common Hazards

Hazards vary by worksite, so to ensure the proper precautions are being taken to avoid injury, employers should conduct regular hazard assessments at their worksites. Examples of instances when a hard hat should be used include:

- When employees are at risk of being hit in the head from falling or flying objects.
- When employees are in the presence of fixed objects that they could hit their heads on.
- When employees are exposed to live electrical conductors.

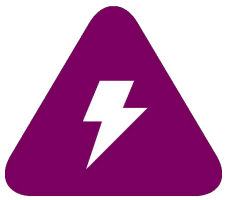
Types, Classes, and Features

All hard hats serve the same basic purpose, but they can differ based on the types of injury and exposures they are designed to defend against. It is important for employees to wear the correct type and class of hard hat for the exposures present. OSHA requires that hard hats be ANSI approved. A label inside of the shell will note the manufacturer's name, ANSI standard the hat conforms with, ANSI type and class, size range, date of manufacture, and features (if applicable).

Types

There are two types of hard hats: Type I and Type II. Type I hard hats are designed to provide protection against physical blows to the top of the head while Type II hard hats are designed to protect against physical blows from both the top and the sides of the head. Another form of head protection is the 'Bump Hat', which is designed for low clearance areas to protect against head bumps and lacerations. Bump Hats are neither designed to protect against falling or flying objects nor are they ANSI-approved.

Classes



There are three classes of hard hats that refer to the hard hat's ability to provide electrical protection.

- Class C (Conductive) – No protection against electric currents.
- Class G (General) – Protection against up to 2,200 volts of electricity.
- Class E (Electrical) – Protection against up to 20,000 volts of electricity.

Features

In addition to the type and class of a hard hat, there are optional features that are recognized by ANSI and are identified on the label. Per the most recent revision of ANSI Z89.1 (2014), those are:

- (Reverse Donning): Can be worn forward or backward
- LT (Lower Temperature): Meets testing requirements at -22 degrees Fahrenheit
- HT (Higher Temperature): Meets testing requirements at 140 degrees Fahrenheit
- HV (High Visibility): Meets standards for high visibility colors

Maintenance and Cleaning

The proper care and cleaning of hard hats is important to retain their function. Many manufacturers strongly discourage the use of paints and other solvents on hard hats since they can degrade the strength of the hard hat itself. This leaves employees open to injury. Modification of any sort and exposure to high heat is discouraged just as strongly. Hard hats should be cleaned using a mixture of mild soap and water and stored according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Do not store the hard hat in direct sunlight as it may result in ultraviolet (UV) or heat damage.

Replacement

Although some manufacturers may include a service life recommendation, neither OSHA nor ANSI provide a specific lifespan for hard hats.

Instead, hard hats should be inspected regularly and replaced if any of the following are found as they can reduce the ability of the hard hat to provide the designed amount of protection:

- Cracks, dents, penetration of the brim or shell
- A chalky or flaky exterior – can be a sign of (UV) damage
- Indication of exposure to heat or chemicals

A hard hat should always be replaced if it sustains an impact or electrical shock, even if there is no noticeable resulting damage. The suspension system in the hard hat may be replaced without replacing the entire hard hat.

Hair Protection

Hard hats are not the only form of head protection. Certain work environments necessitate the use of hair protection. A hair net, hat, or cap should be used to cover the hair completely or control all loose ends when the work environment involves a hair-catching hazard. This typically involves machinery that has nip points, revolving shafts, or other moving parts where hair could be caught.

A solid hair covering should be used when the work environment exposes the employee to hair fire hazards. Those hazards include working around machinery or in a location with exposure to an ignition source, or when the work environment contains a flammable or combustible atmosphere.

Worker Training

It is recommended that employers educate their employees about understanding common hazards warranting hard hat protection in the workplace, the various types of hard hats, and the importance of regular inspection and maintenance of their hard hats.

- Identify common worksite hazards and exposures (i.e. falling or swinging objects, fixed objects at eye level, live electrical conductors)
- Type I versus Type II
- Classes G, E, C
- Identify feature options: Reverse Donning, Lower Temperatures, Higher Temperatures, High Visibility
- Clean using soap and water
- Do not paint or use harsh cleaning solutions
- Do not modify or expose to extreme temperatures
- Potential signs of damage or wear
- Always replace after an impact or electrical shock
- Potential signs of damage or wear
- Always replace after an impact or electrical shock
- Review the types of hair protection available and the workplace hazards that require their use

For additional information, please review 29 CFR 1910.135 and 29 CFR 1926.100.

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Safety Meeting Attendance Acknowledgement

Company Name _____

Department / Division _____

Meeting Date & Time _____ _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

Meeting Location _____

Name & Title of Individual Conducting Meeting _____

Key Meeting Discussion Points / Important Reminders:

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Internal Procedures Reviewed:

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By signing this document, you confirm your attendance at the meeting and acknowledge the issues addressed above!

Employees in Attendance		
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Employees not present: _____

Suggestions/Recommendations to improve workplace safety and health: _____

Actions Taken: _____

Manager/Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Disclaimer:

The information provided above was assembled using multiple resources. However, these materials do not contain ALL the information available regarding the required safety standards under local, provincial, state, or federal law for your industry.