



STEPing toward safety compliance!

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment includes such items as: a hard hat, protective glasses, hearing protection, appropriate foot and hand protection, chemical resistant clothing, fall arrest systems, and other protective items as designated by this facility.

You should not rely on personal protective equipment (PPE) alone to protect you from job site hazards. Exercising care and safe work practices while performing your job tasks is always your first line of defense from hazards.

The word “personal” in the phrase “personal protective equipment” correctly implies that the equipment is for a specific person. As such, sizing and fitting are important for a variety of reasons.

- a. Function: an improperly fitted piece of PPE may not do its job. For example, eye protection against dust must have an excellent face seal.
- b. Comfort: the likelihood of continued use is increased if the PPE selected is comfortably fitted.
Example: gloves that fit poorly and, over time, make your hands hot and clammy are likely to be removed exposing you to the hazard for which the gloves were required in the first place.
- c. Safety: ill-fitting PPE may actually cause an accident. Example: loose hard hat may slip and block one’s vision.

Most PPE come in a variety of sizes and within those size groups adjustments may be made to affect a perfect fit. It is important to understand the procedures for donning, adjusting, using, and removing PPE. If you are required to use any type of PPE, you will be taught, before initial issue, the specific procedures for properly donning, adjusting, using, and removing the specific PPE. When available, the manufacturer’s instructions will be issued with the PPE.

In addition to sizing and fitting, you must understand:

- a. When to use your equipment.
- b. How to inspect it.
- c. How to clean it.
- d. The PPE limitations.
- e. How, if necessary, to dispose of it.

You will be informed of the PPE requirements on the job site. The actual PPE required is determined after data from a complete hazard assessment of the work area and work methods are analyzed.

It is absolutely vital that PPE identified as necessary is used because it may well prevent injury to your various body parts such as eyes, head, hands, feet, or limbs.