

# Actsafe Safety Bulletin #21

## APPROPRIATE CLOTHING & PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The purpose of this Safety Bulletin is to provide Supervisors with a guide for instructing employees in the selection of appropriate clothing and certain types of personal protective equipment (other types are the subjects of separate bulletins). This bulletin also serves as a reference to guide employees as to what types of clothing and personal protective equipment are recommended for specific types of work being done. This bulletin does not include or apply to clothing or PPE for persons subject to the blood borne pathogens standard (Bulletin #24) or respirator protection (Bulletin #26). Please refer to those separate bulletins if you are subject to either standard.

Each employer shall assess their workplace to determine if hazards are present, or are likely to be present, which necessitate the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

For further information, refer to OHS Regulation, Part 8: Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment: <http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/Part8.asp>

### 1. CLOTHING:

- a. Clothing determined by the employer to be appropriate for the work being done shall be worn. Jewelry, loose sleeves, exposed shirt tails, neckties, lapels, loose cuffs or other loose clothing shall not be worn around machinery in which it might become entangled. Long hair shall be tied back when working around machinery and or equipment with moving parts.
- b. Supervisors shall inform employees engaged in any of the following activities of specific requirements by The Workers' Compensation Board of BC or other authorities:
  - i. Working with electricity.
  - ii. Using any hazardous material requiring a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Material Safety Data Sheets are a requirement of Canada's Hazardous Products Act.
  - iii. Welding or cutting.
  - iv. Working with special effects, pyrotechnics, open flames, or hazardous objects.
  - v. Working on construction, including alteration, painting, repairing, maintenance, renovation, removal or wrecking.

### 2. FOOT PROTECTION:

Appropriate foot protection shall be required of employees who are exposed to foot injuries from hot surfaces, corrosive materials, hazardous substances, falling objects, mobile equipment, crushing or penetrating actions which may cause injuries, or who are required to work in abnormally, wet locations or cold locations, or where there is the chance of electrical shock or any other recognizable hazard.

### 3. HAND PROTECTION:

Hand protection (gloves) shall be required of employees whose work involves unusual and excessive exposure to cuts, burns, harmful physical hazards, chemical agents or electrical hazards which are encountered and capable of causing injury or impairments. Hand protection should not be worn where there is a danger of it becoming entangled in moving machinery. Hand protection should be appropriate for the type of exposure, (e.g. porous where exposure is to cuts; non-porous; or non-porous over porous where exposure is to harmful chemicals). Gloves should be properly discarded if they become impregnated with materials which may cause dermatitis or other damaging skin conditions.

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### 4. EYE AND FACE PROTECTION:

Employees working in locations where there is a risk of receiving eye injuries such as punctures, abrasions, contusions, or burns as a result of contact with flying particles, hazardous substances, projections or injurious light rays which are inherent in the work or environment, shall be safeguarded by suitable and properly fitting face protection. Side shield protection shall also be utilized when employees are exposed to the risk of flying objects/particles/materials entering the eyes from the side. Suitable screens or shields isolating the hazardous exposure may be used if they provide adequate safeguarding for nearby employees. Specialized forms of eye protection are required for certain types of work such as welding.

### 5. HEARING PROTECTION:

When workers are exposed to an eight hour time weighted average (TWA) of 85 Decibels or greater, or 135 Decibels or higher peak sound level, the employer must implement a hearing conservation program. As part of this program employers have the responsibility to implement one or more of the following options:

- 1) eliminate the hazard,
- 2) implement administrative procedures, or
- 3) offer workers a variety of suitable hearing protection which would include, training workers in the care and use of the device and ensuring proper initial fit.

### 6. HEAD PROTECTION:

- a. Employees exposed to flying or falling objects and/or electric shock and burns or other harmful contacts shall be safeguarded by means of approved head protection.
- b. Examples of falling object hazards are working below other workers who are using tools and materials which could fall, and working below machinery or processes which might cause material or objects to fall. Some examples of occupations for which head protection should be routinely considered are carpenters, electricians, mechanics, welders, laborers, etc.
- c. Chin straps or other means of retention are to be used at height or where high winds or other conditions may cause loss of the headgear.

### 7. SANITATION:

Personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be capable of being cleaned easily and disinfected, or disposed of after use. PPE shall be kept clean and in good rep