



COMPANY NAME: _____

Volume 46 Issue 18 May 1, 2023

Hard Hats for Different Types of Work

Your hard hat is essential. It will protect your head from cuts, bruises, electric shock and burns, and traumatic brain injuries. It'll also protect you when your co-worker turns around suddenly and the 2x4 on his shoulder whacks you in the head.

Hard hats are organized into 3 classes and 2 types. All 3 classes of hard hats are available in both Type I and Type II configurations. Consider all of the hazards in your work environment, and then select the right hard hat for the protection you need.

Choose a hard hat based on the class of protection you need from electrical hazards.

- Class G (General) hard hats protect against impact and penetration. They're tested to withstand up to 2,200 volts.
- Class E (Electrical) hard hats also protect against impact and penetration, and add more electrical protection. Class E hard hats are tested to withstand up to 20,000 volts. They're used by electricians and utility workers.
- Class C (Conductive) hard hats are designed for lightweight comfort and impact protection. They offer no protection from electric shock.

Then, make sure the type you choose provides enough impact protection.

- Type I hard hats provide protection from impacts to the top of the head only.

- Type II hard hats provide protection from impacts to the top and sides of the head. Because they protect all sides of your head, Type II hard hats are better at preventing traumatic brain injuries. Many contractors now require workers to wear Type II hard hats.

Your hard hat only protects you when you wear it.

- Your hard hat can't protect you if it's on the seat in your truck. Wear it properly. Adjust the suspension so it fits your head comfortably—not too tight or too loose. Don't wear it backwards.
- Inspect your hard hat regularly. Look for signs of damage and wear like cracks, dents, fading, and loose or missing parts. Any of these issues can weaken your hard hat and make it ineffective. Replace your hard hat if you notice any problems.
- Never alter your hard hat in any way. Don't wear anything under it that can interfere with the suspension. Don't drill holes in it or glue anything to it; you could weaken the shell.
- Take care of your hard hat. Wash it regularly with a mild detergent. Store it out of direct sunlight.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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See a doctor if you get hit on the head. You could have a concussion. Symptoms of a concussion include: headache, nausea, dizziness, confusion, and sensitivity to light or noise.

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Volume 46 Issue 19 May 8, 2023

Prevent Heat-Related Illnesses

The jobsite can get hot. Maybe the air conditioning isn't installed in the building you're working in. You might have to do a job outside while the sun beats down. Or maybe—even though the temperature is only in the 80s—the humidity is through the roof. When your job involves physical work in the heat, you should take action to control your risk for developing a heat-related illness.

Stay hydrated. Drink a big glass of water when you wake up. Then, sip water or a sports drink throughout the day to replace the fluid you lose by sweating. Drink 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes, even if you don't feel thirsty. Avoid caffeinated tea, coffee, soda, and energy drinks which can worsen dehydration. After work, avoid alcohol. Not only will drinking alcohol dehydrate you, but it increases your risk for developing a heat-related illness for about 24 hours.

Dress to stay cool. Wear an approved moisture-wicking and cooling skullcap under your hard hat. Use a cooling neck wrap. Wear lightweight, tightly woven, loose-fitting, and light-colored clothing.

Prepare for the heat. For the first few days of a heat wave, you'll need to take more frequent breaks to cool down and hydrate. Over time, your body will adjust, and it will be easier to get your work done.

Plan your day. If the jobsite trailer is the coolest spot around, you may have to stagger your breaks so the whole crew doesn't cram into the trailer at once. Schedule the hardest work in the morning when it's not as hot.

Protect yourself from the sun. Work indoors or in the shade when possible. Put a canopy over the table saw, for instance, or set the saw up in the shade. Wear safety sunglasses to protect your eyes. Wear sunscreen.

Recognize the signs of dehydration and overheating including: thirst, infrequent urination or dark urine, dry skin and mouth, fatigue, light-headedness or dizziness, confusion, rapid heart rate, and rapid breathing. When you're dehydrated and you're hot, you're at greater risk for developing a heat-related illness like heat cramps, fainting, and heat exhaustion, all of which can progress to heat stroke.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. It's the most serious heat-related illness and can cause disability and death. Heat stroke occurs when the body can't control its temperature and can't cool down. Symptoms include: headache, slurred speech, hallucinations, disorientation, confusion, agitation, sluggishness, high body temperature, rapid heartbeat, seizures, loss of consciousness, and skin that's hot, dry, and flushed but not sweaty. If you suspect that a co-worker is suffering from heat stroke, call 911! While you're waiting for help, cool the worker quickly. Get them into cold water or an ice bath. Or put cold, wet cloths or ice on their head, neck, armpits, and groin. Use a fan to help speed the cooling.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Some medications can increase your risk for heat-related illnesses. Check with your pharmacist.

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Volume 46 Issue 20 May 15, 2023

First-Aid Kit Basics

Having a first-aid kit is important. You never know when you'll need it so you can provide minor medical treatment to someone who's hurt. And when your kit is well-stocked, it'll have everything you need to help treat someone with a small injury or stabilize someone who's badly hurt and waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

A fully stocked first-aid kit is part of a safe jobsite.

- It allows you to treat injuries quickly, prevent infection, reduce pain, and minimize damage.
- It's required by OSHA regulations.
- It actually boosts morale, because it signals that safety is important, and workers know that basic medical care is easily available.

For a first-aid kit to be useful, it needs to be stocked, updated, and ready to use. It's essential that you regularly check and re-stock first-aid kits to make sure that all the necessary supplies are there, and that none of them have expired. Check it at least once a month.

Be sure you know where the first-aid kits are located on the jobsite. If you don't know how to use the items in the kit, ask your supervisor if you can take a first-aid course. The American Red Cross even offers online courses.

Here are some common items that every first-aid kit should have:

- Disposable gloves, a CPR mask, and an N-95 mask for you to use when you provide first aid.

- Antiseptic wipes or spray for cleaning wounds.
- Antibiotic ointment to prevent infection.
- Sterile saline solution for cleaning wounds or, along with a sterile eyecup, for flushing dirt or chemicals out of the eyes.
- Sterile gauze pads and adhesive tape for dressing wounds.
- Bandages of various sizes and shapes for cuts and scrapes.
- Tweezers for removing foreign objects from wounds.
- Cold packs and splints for strains and sprains.
- Scissors and a thermometer.
- Common medications like antacids, anti-diarrhea medication, antihistamines, and pain relievers like Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Advil (ibuprofen).

If you don't have first-aid training, most kits have a quick reference guide for first aid and CPR that you can use in an emergency. Check the instructions before using items in the first-aid kit since some items can be used for several different problems. Always call 911 for serious or life-threatening injuries and illnesses.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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If there's an AED on the jobsite, find out where it is so you can get it quickly if you need it.

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Volume 46 Issue 21 May 22, 2023

Safe Lifting

Construction work is physically demanding. On a typical day, you may use the muscles in your back to: **1)** move heavy materials from one location to another, stack them, or load them on a truck; **2)** lift and install equipment like air conditioning units, plumbing fixtures, or generators; and **3)** lift large, heavy tools like jackhammers.

You could strain your back and experience some minor pain if you lift incorrectly. But there's a bigger issue: One bad lift, even if you're lifting a small item, could cause long-term problems and even leave you permanently disabled. The good news is that you can prevent back injuries: Follow safe work practices. Use proper lifting techniques. Stretch before you start lifting. And strengthen your muscles with exercise.

There's a lot to think about before you lift and while you're lifting. But first, you have to know how much weight you can lift safely. This depends on several factors:

Your age: As you age, your muscles and joints become less flexible, increasing your risk for back injuries.

Your fitness level: Exercise improves muscle strength, endurance, and flexibility. If you're physically fit, you're more likely to be able to lift more weight safely, and you're less likely to get injured when you do so.

Your history of back problems: If you've injured your back before, you're at a higher risk for another injury.

Your general health: Workers who are overweight may be

at a higher risk for back injuries because excess physical weight can put additional strain on the back. And those who suffer from health problems, like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, may need to avoid heavy lifting.

Before you lift anything, consider the following:

- Is the object too heavy? Is it over 50 pounds? Could you ask a co-worker for help? Better yet, could you use a mechanical lifting device instead?
- Is the object large or awkwardly shaped? Can you get a good grip on it?
- Is your path free of obstructions, spills, and tripping hazards? Will the object block your view so you can't see where you're going? Do you have enough room to maneuver?

When you're ready to lift: Wear gloves to improve your grip. Be sure the load is stable. Stand as close to the object as possible. Place your feet shoulder-width apart with one foot slightly in front. Bend your knees and hips so you're in a squatting position. Lift with your legs and keep your back straight. Hold the object close to your body. Keep your shoulders in line with your hips. Take small, steady steps. Put the object down as carefully as you picked it up. Never lift a heavy object above your shoulders and never twist your body while lifting or carrying an object.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Don't be embarrassed. It's cool to ask for help!

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Volume 46 Issue 22 May 29, 2023

Electrical Hazards on the Jobsite

You can't do your work without a reliable source of power. And because electricity is always present, but not always visible, we sometimes overlook the hazards that it presents and we forget to give it the respect it deserves.

Remember that electrocution is one of the "Fatal Four"—the top four causes of construction deaths. And electricity can also cause electrical shock, burns, fires, explosions, and arc blasts.

You're exposed to electrical hazards when you:

- use defective equipment or tools.
- use extension cords improperly.
- use faulty cords.
- don't respect power lines.
- improperly ground equipment.
- work with power tools in wet or damp locations.
- don't follow proper LOTO procedures.

Respect the power of electricity.

- Look up to see if any power lines are nearby before using a ladder or starting any task.
- Call 811 before you dig, even if it's just a small hole to plant a tree. Make sure you understand what the colors of the markings mean.
- Don't operate power tools with wet hands or in damp conditions.
- Plug tools into an outlet protected by GFCIs.

- Follow LOTO procedures so you can't come in contact with electricity.

Keep yourself, and all the conductive objects you handle, at least 10 feet away from power lines. You can be electrocuted if you use a metal ladder or other metal tools or equipment too close to overhead power lines—even if you never touch the power line with the tool. Take care when you're raising, lowering, or relocating a ladder. Carry ladders and other long tools horizontally. Keep them far away from power lines. Make sure scissor and boom lifts don't get too close to power lines. Remember that the 10-foot clearance is a minimum. Higher voltages require larger clearances.

Treat electrical equipment carefully. Every time you use a damaged tool or cord, you're gambling with your life. Normal wear and tear on tools and extension cords can expose wires or metal parts that can shock you, burn you, or cause a fire. Inspect portable power tools and electrical cords carefully and often. Protect the insulation on power cords. Never run cords around sharp corners or under material. Don't run them where vehicles or forklifts can drive over them. Never use staples or nails to hold cords in place. Don't use damaged power tools or cords! Tag them "Do Not Use" and take them out of service.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Never touch a person who's in contact with a live power line.

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