

# TOOLBOX TALK

## HEAD & FACE PROTECTION

Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as hard hats and face shields, are the last line of defense to protect workers. When engineering and administrative controls are not feasible or effective, PPE must be used to reduce employee exposure to certain hazards.

OSHA regulations require employers to do a hazard assessment to determine what PPE employees should use, including head and face protection. Employers must provide any necessary PPE and train employees on how to use it.

### Head Protection

Hard hats provide some protection, but not all hard hats are made to offer the impact protection or electrical protection you may need. Your employer must ensure that you have and wear a hard hat that provides appropriate protection against potential workplace hazards. Here are some different types of jobs and hazards that may require the use of hard hats:

- Working beneath or near others who are handling tools, materials, or equipment
- Working beneath or near a scaffold or overhead platform where tools, materials, or equipment are being used
- Working in areas where others are performing tasks on a roof, elevated floor, or other overhead work area
- Working near earth-moving equipment or similar equipment that transports soil, rocks or gravel
- Working in a trench or other excavation
- Working inside a confined space with overhead access
- Working near overhead electrical lines
- Working inside electrical utility vaults

### Face Protection

Not all face shields are the same, and only offer protection against certain types of hazards. Your employer must ensure that you have and wear face protection when exposed to certain hazards. Here are some different types of hazards that could require the use of some type of face protection device:



- Abrasive wheels such as those used on grinding and cutting equipment can shatter and strike you in the face.
- Sparks and molten metals produced when working with or around certain pieces of equipment or processes can burn your face.
- Corrosive chemicals in liquid or powder form can cause a chemical burn on your face.
- Blood or other potentially infectious materials may splatter or spray onto your face and possibly enter your nose, or mouth.

### THINGS YOU SHOULD DO IN THE WORKPLACE:

- Inspect hard hats routinely for expiration date, dents, cracks, or deterioration.
- Ensure that the hard hat is the proper size – it should not bind, slip, fall off, or irritate the skin.
- If a hard hat has taken a heavy blow or electrical shock, your employer must replace it even when you detect no visible damage.
- Only wear products, such as winter liners and sunshades, that are designed specifically to work in conjunction with hard hats. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations for use.
- Identify jobs or tasks that present or may present potential hazards to your face.
- Not all face shields are alike, so only use face protection devices that have been provided or approved by the company, or you could be injured or become ill.
- If you feel there is a new operation or product in your work area that has not been evaluated, please alert your supervisor or safety manager immediately so the hazard can be addressed.

### THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO IN THE WORKPLACE:

- Do Not drill; clean with strong detergents or solvents; paint; or store them in extreme temperatures. Maintain hard hats in good condition.
- Do Not wear your hard hat backwards unless specifically approved by the hard hat manufacturer and your employer.
- Never use a hardhat suspension that is not intended for use with a particular shell, or one that is made by a different manufacturer.

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## REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Hard hats do not need to be worn when working near others working overhead?  
 a) True  
 b) False
- 2) Recognizing hazards is everyone's responsibility.  
 a) True  
 b) False
- 3) If you left your face shield at home and need to wear one for the work you will be performing, it is okay to borrow another contractor's equipment to get the job done?  
 a) True  
 b) False

Talk Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name**

**Signature**


Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace and workers have rights. OSHA can help answer questions or concerns from employers and workers. OSHA's On-site Consultation Program offers free and confidential advice to small and medium-sized businesses, with priority given to high-hazard worksites. For more information, contact your regional or area OSHA office, call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), or visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

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