

TOOLBOX TALK

EYES, FACE AND EARS

PPE stands for personal protective equipment which we use in our daily work activities. OSHA requires that employers ensure that employees wear appropriate PPE to reduce exposure to hazardous conditions such as falling objects, noise, harmful atmospheres, etc. **Personal protective equipment is provided for your protection and each of us must follow safety rules and wear PPE when required.**

EYES and FACE

Some 150,000 disabling eye injuries occur each year. Eye injuries can occur in any operation and in any work area, including offices. All too often we take our eyesight for granted and figure that we'll always have it. We too often treat our eyes as though we can get replacements.

There are many situation where the eyes and face need to be protected and there are many types and sizes of safety glassess and goggles to protect the eyes. Each tyoe has a special application. Be sure you read the manufacturer's instructions before wearing eye protection, choose the right type and discard or replace dirty or damaged equipment.. Face shields should be worn if potential splashing danger exists from physical, chemical or radiation agents. Emergency first aid procedures, such as flushing with water, are discussed in the Safety Data Sheet for the particular chemical. **Eye protection begins with the ability to recognize those times that eye protection is needed, and then, to seriously commit to wear the protection whenever necessary.** Anytime you're working where there is the potential for flying particles eye protection is required, such as when using a saw, drill, pouring concrete, chipping, blasting or handling potentially hazardous chemicals.. Dirt, dust, rust, rock, bits of concrete, etc. are all potential debris dangers in construction work and special effects on Set.

EARS

Hearing protection is essential when noise exposures can't be adequately controlled at their source. Both earplugs and earmuffs provide a physical barrier that reduces inner ear noise levels and prevent hearing loss from occurring. However, people often resist wearing these or use them incorrectly.

Employees resist wearing hearing protection more than any other type of personal protective equipment. One reason is, they don't think they really need it. But hearing loss occurs so gradually (even in intense exposures) that by the time you notice it, irreversible damage may have already occurred. Another reason often given for not wearing hearing protection is that it can feel uncomfortable. Sometimes workers "spring" the muffs so they don't seal properly against the head, or snip off the inner portion of ear plugs leaving only the outer end so that the earplug does not protrude as far into the ear.. If your hearing protection is uncomfortable, see

your supervisor about obtaining a different type or style that fits you correctly and more comfortably.

Personal Protective Equipment can be cumbersome, uncomfortable, hot, etc. and employees occasionally resist wear it even though they know they may be risking injury. Any worker who fails to wear required PPE may be subject to disciplinary action..

Evaluate your work operations and define the hazards. Check with your supervisor for necessary PPE requirements. An ounce of protection is worth a pound or cure.

Let's wrap up what we've learned. Eyesight and hearing is precious -- and -- irreplaceable. Don't take chances with your vision or hearing -- wear eye and hearing protection!

KEEP YOUR PPE CLEAN AND IN GOOD WORKING ORDER. REPLACE ANY SOILED OR DEFECTIVE GEAR IMMEDIATELY.