

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) GUIDELINES

The selection, maintenance and effective life of PPE will depend on your work situation. Consult with your PPE or material supplier for more information or refer to the relevant Australian Standard. Train your workers on how to fit, wear and maintain PPE.

SUN SCREEN/SUNGLASSES/HAT - UV RADIATION

Possible Hazards:

- Sunburn;
- Skin cancer;
- Pterygia; and
- Corneal cataracts.

Safety Controls:

- Wear cotton long sleeved shirt with collar and trousers;
- Wear a hat with an 8 cm brim or a cap with flaps;
- Use an SPF 15+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen;
- Wear wraparound sunglasses that fit the face and conform to AS1067;
- Work in the shade as much as possible and sit in the shade during work breaks; and
- Where appropriate, change the job so that much of the work is carried out undercover or away from direct sunlight such as natural shade or by using tarpaulins, tents, sails, canopies or umbrellas to protect workers.

Skin cancer researchers say that providing PPE is insufficient, prevention messages must be coupled with early detection education to make sure that skin cancer risks are appropriately managed and there is early detection of skin cancer in the workplace.

HAT/COTTON CLOTHING - HEAT STRESS

Possible Hazards:

- Dehydration; and
- Temporary or permanent damage through rise in body temperature.

Safety Controls:

- Wear a hat;
- Wear a single layer of cotton clothing;
- Where appropriate, install tarpaulins, tents, sails, canopies or umbrellas to enable working in the shade; and
- Drink water frequently, at least every hour and more than required to satisfy thirst.

RESPIRATION EQUIPMENT – DUST

Possible Hazards:

- Inhalation of dust particles can cause rhinitis or bronchitis, damage to lung tissue, allergic reactions or trigger asthma attacks; and
- Permanent scarring in the lungs known as fibrosis from some types of dust particles.



Safety Controls:

- Reduce dust where possible, such as wetting down dusty areas;
- Use tools fitted with a water attachment to suppress dust (on power saws, jack picks);
- Work in a ventilated area; and
- If you have a beard, wear a respirator with a hood or helmet and visor.

Proper breathing protection must be worn when working with materials that produce airborne particles.

RESPIRATION EQUIPMENT – CHEMICAL

Possible Hazards:

- Inhalation of toxic chemicals can cause injury to health or death in extreme cases.



Safety Controls:

- Consult manufacturer's Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Make sure manufacturer's instructions are followed at all times when using hazardous substances;
- Wear appropriate respiratory equipment with chemical filters or oxygen; and
- Train workers in the use of chemicals and application equipment.

Use and Maintenance

- Make sure the correct filter is used for the work to be carried out. Check the expiry date on the filter pack;
- Filters should be checked and changed regularly – consult the manufacturers or suppliers filter time usage. A maximum of eight hours of actual use is recommended but if the odour or taste of the chemical is noticed, the filters should be changed immediately;
- Follow manufacturers or suppliers recommendations for use and maintenance of PPE as stated on the SDS;
- Always test the respirator to make sure a good comfortable seal is maintained on the face by following these procedures:
 - Place the hands over the filter(s) and inhale. In the case of a good seal, the face-piece will collapse inwardly, and no leak can be heard;
 - If air enters, tighten the fit by adjusting the headband;
 - Note: A proper fit cannot be achieved if the person has a beard or facial hair, the seal should touch the face, therefore a respirator with a hood or helmet and visor should be worn.
- Face-pieces are available in different shapes and sizes and it is important to make sure the type used provides a satisfactory seal;

- Before use, make sure that the face-piece, valves, filters and hoses are in good condition and well maintained. If not, **DO NOT USE**;
- The inside of the respirator shall not be exposed to any chemicals or other substances during use or storage. After use, remove filter(s) and wash the face-piece using warm water and soap;
- Fumes and chemicals in the air can still be absorbed by respirator filters even when they are not being worn and will shorten the use life of the filter. Keep the filter in an air tight container while not in use;
- Store any respirator and filter(s) in a sealed plastic bag and in a clean dry place, away from the chemical storage area; and
- Any person using chemicals should have their own face-piece. Respirators should not be shared, borrowed or lent without proper sterilisation.

EAR MUFFS/EAR PLUGS – EXCESSIVE NOISE

Possible Hazards:

- Loud and excessive noise, and prolonged exposure to noise can lead to deafness.



Safety Controls:

- Hearing protection (ear muffs or ear plugs) must be worn at all times when operating or working near loud noise or noisy equipment;
- Complying with the Safe Work Australia Code of Practice Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at work;
- Try and separate the workers from the noise source by isolating the noisy equipment and making the location a hearing protection area;
- Do not expose anyone to 85dB(A) for more than 8 hours;
- Do not expose anyone to noise levels more than 140dB(A); and
- The following equipment and average noise levels are listed as a guide:
 - Stroke mower – 100 dB(A)
 - Chainsaw idling - 80-90 dB(A)
 - Chainsaw cutting - 105-120 dB(A)
 - Threshold of pain - 140 dB(A)

HARD HATS – HEAD INJURIES

Possible Hazards:

- Cuts;
- Abrasions;
- Bruising;
- Concussion;
- Fractures; and
- Death (in extreme cases).



Safety Controls:

- Hard hats to be worn when working in low or confined spaces;
- Hard hats to be worn when operating or working near plant and equipment; and
- Hard hats to be worn when working below overhead work or around areas where objects may fall from a height.

SAFETY FOOTWEAR/STEEL CAPPED BOOTS/LEATHER BOOTS/GUM BOOTS

Possible Hazards:

- Cuts;
- Abrasions;
- Bruising; and
- Fractures.



Safety Controls:

- Wearing safety boots / steel capped boots will prevent or reduce the damage to feet and ankles caused by objects falling onto, hitting or penetrating footwear;
- Make sure boots fit properly and are in good condition; and
- Wear gumboots when required.

EYE PROTECTION/FACE PROTECTION

Possible Hazards:

- Flying objects / debris;
- Cuts;
- Abrasions;
- Bruises; and
- Eye damage or blindness.



Safety Controls:

- Wearing eye protection or face protection where objects or debris can become projectiles and cause damage to the face or eyes, such as lawn edger's, angle grinders and generally most power tools;
- Wearing eye or face protection when chemicals and solvents are being used or handled;
- Wearing eye and face protection when carrying out hot work such as using welding and cutting equipment; and
- Make sure water is available for flushing the eyes and washing skin.

HAND PROTECTION/GLOVES

Possible Hazards:



- Cuts;
- Abrasions;
- Burns (heat);
- Burns (chemical);
- Absorption;
- White finger syndrome;
- Needles / syringes - in public workplaces; and
- Stings or bites.

Safety Controls:

- Wear gloves when handling hot, sharp or abrasive objects, where there is the potential to be stung or bitten by spiders or insects or where there is the potential to be stuck by needles while working in public places;
- Wear approved safety gloves when handling chemicals or solvents as per manufacturer's recommendations (Refer to SDS); and
- Wear thick gloves with a cotton lining to prevent white finger or Reinald syndrome caused by repetitive work motions or exposure to vibrations caused by machinery or power tools. If numbness, tingling, pain or whitening of the skin occurs, stop using machinery or tool and consult a physician.

HIGH VISIBILITY CLOTHING / VEST

Possible Hazards:

- Cuts;
- Bruising;
- Crushing; and
- Death in extreme cases.



Safety Controls:

- High visibility clothing or illuminated safety vests must be worn when working on or near plant and equipment, near roads, railways or traffic, and in situations where it is essential that the worker is visible to others;
- Vest must be fastened (fines may apply for the worker wearing a vest open if caught by relevant Authorities).
- Reflective clothing / vests to be worn at night.

OVERALLS / COVERALLS

Possible Hazards:

- Cuts;
- Abrasions;
- Chemical burns or absorption; and
- Hazardous waste exposure.



Safety Controls:

- Wear overalls when the body needs protection from sharp or abrasive surfaces or objects, contact with extreme temperatures;
- Where required, wear washable or disposable boiler suit as recommended by the manufacturer in the SDS; and
- Tyvek or similar overalls should be worn if recommended by the manufacturer of a chemical that can cause skin irritation or illness through skin absorption. Consult the manufacturer's SDS for overall or coverall recommendations.

FALL ARREST SYSTEM / SAFETY HARNESS – WORKING NEAR OR AT HEIGHTS

Possible Hazards:

- Falling from height or objects dropped from height;
- Bruising;
- Fractures; and
- Death.



Entanglement Hazards:

- To reduce the risk of injury from entanglement, do not wear loose clothing, tie long hair back and remove jewellery, when using rotating equipment or equipment fitted with rotating accessories.

Safety Controls:

- Harnesses should be worn if there is a risk of falling from a height in excess of 1.8 metres;
- When selecting safety harness or inertia reel system, ensure compliance with Code of Practices and Australian Standards; and
- Check condition of all harnesses, ropes, shackles and fixing points for fall arrest system prior to use.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS FOR PPE

- **Safety helmets** must comply with AS1800, AS1801 and AS1698 and are to be replaced after 2 years from issue date or earlier if damaged.
- All **eye protection** must comply with AS1336, AS1337 and AS1338.
- **Ear protection** must comply with AS1270.
- **Respiratory protection** to be used will depend on the work to be carried out and must comply with AS1715 and AS1716.
- **Hand protection** must comply with AS2161 and AS2225.
- **Footwear** for work must comply with AS2210.