

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) program

What if you could protect your “eyes and ears” on the jobsite?

Zurich’s personal protective equipment (PPE) program is designed to protect construction personnel from workplace injuries or illnesses resulting from contact with mechanical, electrical, physical, chemical or other workplace hazards.

The challenge

Construction jobsite hazards exist in many different forms and cannot be eliminated solely by engineering, job design or product substitutions. Sharp edges, falling objects, flying sparks, chemicals, noise and a variety of other potentially dangerous situations require workers to use PPE such as hardhats, eyewear and foot-protection.

Unfortunately, facts from the Bureau of Labor Statistics¹ indicate that the effective use of PPE has substantial room for improvement:

- For workers who sustained head injuries, only 16% wore hardhats, despite the fact that 40% were required to wear them
- Only 1% of 770 workers suffering face injuries were wearing face protection
- Of workers with foot injuries, only 23% wore appropriate safety shoes or boots

In addition, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) requires that all employers perform a written assessment in the workplace for hazards that would require their employees to wear PPE. The OSHA standard requires that the workplace evaluation be documented and have provisions for employee training.

The solution

Zurich Services Corporation’s PPE program is a comprehensive set of tools that help organizations determine which engineering and administrative controls should be in place prior to issuance or mandate of PPE, and assist in selecting the appropriate PPE for the task.

The program consists of the following components:

Hazard assessment

All employers must assess the workplace to identify hazards and to determine which hazards require the use of PPE.

Equipment selection

Once hazards are identified, it is management’s responsibility to select and provide the right PPE to protect employees.

Training

Management must provide training for all employees and should show each exposure and what PPE is required.

Retraining and reassessment

Retraining and reassessment is required when there is a change in the workplace or job that would warrant a different type of equipment or if the training has become obsolete.

Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping is needed to document that a hazard assessment has been performed, including workplace evaluated, who certified, date of assessment, etc.

In conjunction with Zurich's PPE program, we also offer the following additional resources to assist in the development or enhancement of an existing PPE program:

- PPE hazard assessment
- Sample PPE policy and program
- PPE self inspection checklist
- Personal Protective Equipment DVD from the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC)
- Respiratory Protection videos from the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC)
- Bloodborne pathogens exposure evaluation questionnaire

These resources provide valuable insight into training requirements, program development and lifetime cost factors.

Benefits

- Fosters a positive safety culture
- Assists in preventing injuries and may lessen the severity of injuries that do occur
- Helps to potentially decrease incident rates for both lost time and OSHA recordable injuries
- Assists in meeting state and federal requirements for PPE hazard assessment and implementation

For more information

For more information on Zurich's personal protective equipment (PPE) program, please contact your risk engineering account coordinator.

Zurich's PPE program focuses on hazards to the hand, foot, head, eye and face. It does not address noise exposure/control or respiratory protection.

For more information on hearing conservation and respiratory protection programs, please contact your risk engineering account coordinator.

Source: 1 U.S. Department of Labor (OSHA Fact Sheet 92-08)

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