

YCPARMIA Safety Journal

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PPE: It Does a Body Good

Don't get caught without protection

Imagine you're the first person to set foot on Mars. You're about to step out of the landing craft and plant your feet on the red soil of Mars. Do you say, "Nah, I don't think I'll bother with that bulky spacesuit. I'll just go out in my jumpsuit and a pair of sneakers"? Not likely!

Now let's come back down to earth. Imagine you're a firefighter about to enter a burning building. Black, choking smoke is pouring from the windows. Do you say, "That SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) is so heavy and hot. What the heck, I'll skip it"? If you do, you're in big trouble the minute you take a breath inside.

Maybe as a kid you used to dream of being a sports star. Let's say you're a hockey goalie trying to stop a puck flying at you at high speed. Do you say, "I'm a tough guy. I don't need the pads, the gloves, or the mask"? I don't think so!

OK, now you're you again starting your work shift. Let's say you're required to wear safety glasses, a hard hat, and safety shoes on the job. Do you say, "Who needs all that stuff. I'll be careful"? If so, you could end up with one eye, a hole in your head, and missing a few toes.

Why chance it? Personal protective equipment (PPE) is specially designed by engineers and safety experts just to protect you. It's specially assigned by our safety personnel for you to wear to protect your safety. Why would you choose not to use it anymore than the astronaut, the firefighter, or the hockey goalie would decide not to use their PPE? It doesn't make sense, does it?

So remember:

- Always use assigned PPE.
- Make sure it fits properly.
- Inspect it first to make sure it's in good condition.
- Replace it when it's damaged or wears out.
- Check with your supervisor before starting a job if you're not sure if PPE is required or which kind to use to protect against the specific hazards you face.
- Keep your PPE clean and store it where it won't get damaged.

WHAT KIND OF PPE DO YOU NEED?

PPE can be a lifesaver. There are so many cases where employees have been saved from serious injury or death because they were wearing the right PPE. So what kind of PPE do you need and when should you wear it? You may need:

Head protection to protect against:

- Bumps
- Falling objects
- Electricity

Hearing protection to protect against loud noises (generally above 85 decibels)

Eye protection to protect against:

- Flying particles, sparks, and other objects that can hit the eyes
- Splashing hazardous liquids
- Hazardous vapors, gases, fumes, and dust
- Molten metal and hot liquids
- Harmful light radiation

Hand protection to protect against:

- Sharp objects
- Splinters, rough surfaces, or dirt
- Chemicals
- Sparks, molten metals, and hot liquids
- Extreme heat or cold
- Electricity
- Bloodborne pathogens and other biohazards

Foot protection to protect against:

- Falling objects
- Sharp objects
- Heat or cold
- Electricity
- Slips and falls

Your employer will provide you with the right PPE. But it's up to you to wear it.

Workplace Roulette

Are you gambling with your safety?

Every time you fail to follow safety rules, you're betting that an accident won't happen. Sooner or later, that's a bet you're bound to lose. Like these workers:

** Alex and Sam were fooling around on the loading dock when Alex took a step back to dodge a pack of shrink wrap that Alex threw at him. Unfortunately, Sam was standing on the edge of the dock. He heard his leg snap when he hit the ground several feet below the dock.*

** Jessica didn't bother to read the label on a container of a chemical product, so she didn't know she was supposed to wear gloves. She still has scars from the burns when the stuff spilled on her unprotected hands.*

** Susan's machine was acting up. She knew she should report the problem so that a qualified technician could have a look at it. But she liked to tinker, so she tried to fix the machine herself. Had she reported the problem and let the technician make the repairs she'd still have all the fingers on her right hand.*

** Herb wore safety goggles on the job because he had to, but when he was in his workshop at home, he didn't bother. One day when he was using his table saw, a chip of wood flew up into his eye. But what the heck, he can still see out of the other eye.*

Don't take chances with your future; always do the safe thing and you won't lose a bet with your life.



DANGER! DANGER!

Watch out for and obey safety signs

One important way we try to prevent workplace accidents is by posting safety signs around the facility to warn you of hazards. For example, if there's an immediate hazard that could cause death or serious injury—like high voltage electricity or flammable gas—we'll post a **DANGER** sign, with “danger” in a red oval on a black background.

To warn you against potential hazards, such as wet floors or unsafe practices, such as entering a restricted area, or to warn you to take certain precautions, such as wearing PPE or watching out for forklifts, we use **CAUTION** signs, with “caution” in yellow letters against a black background.

And when the hazard level is between **DANGER** and **CAUTION**, we use **WARNING** signs, with an orange background and letters in a contrasting color. Examples of **WARNING** signs include “**WARNING: No Smoking**” and “**WARNING: Keep Guards in Place.**”

We also post safety instruction signs that are designed to provide you with general health and safety information. Safety instruction signs might include slogans such as “**SAFETY FIRST,**” “**BE CAREFUL,**” or “**THINK SAFETY.**”

Look for safety signs everywhere you go—and always obey them.



Rate Your Safety Sense

What would you do in these situations?

1. You have to reach some supplies on a high shelf. Should you:
a. Stand on a chair? b. Get a ladder?
2. You are working with a hazardous material and have questions about what PPE to use. Should you:
a. Consult the label or MSDS? b. Figure your usual PPE should protect you?
3. You see a hazard in a location outside your work area. Should you:
a. Ignore it, since it's not in your work area?
b. Report the problem to a supervisor?
4. You see a co-worker doing something unsafe. Should you:
a. Shake your head and walk away? b. Talk to your co-worker about it?
5. A machine you operate is malfunctioning. Should you:
a. Shut it down and let maintenance repair it? b. Try to repair it yourself?
6. You see some cartons blocking a fire exit. Should you:
a. Figure it's not your problem if you didn't put them there?
b. Move the cartons?
7. You're running behind on a job. Should you:
a. Rush through the job to complete it on time?
b. Talk to your supervisor about the work schedule?
8. You forgot your safety glasses in your locker. Should you:
a. Go back and get them? b. Work without them?

Safe Choices: (1) b (2) a (3) b (4) b (5) a (6) b (7) b (8) a

Mastering Machines

Take these precautions

Because of the speed and force with which machine accidents happen, they're responsible for some of the worst workplace injuries—amputations, for example. In the face of such a serious threat you always want to be alert and take these precautions to prevent accidents when operating any machine:

- Always wear appropriate PPE such as eye protection. Wear safety shoes, too, if your job involves handling heavy stock or machine parts.
- Wear proper work clothing—nothing with loose sleeves or other material that could get caught in the machine. Also remove jewelry and tie back or cover long hair for the same reason.
- Make sure all guards protecting you from moving parts are in place and operating correctly.
- Never leave a machine running unattended.
- Don't make manual adjustments while the machine is running.
- Use only appropriate brushes, vacuum equipment, or special tools for removing chips and debris, not your hands.
- Call in trained and qualified maintenance personnel to make repairs.
- Keep the area around machines free from debris, scrap, and trash.
- Report machine problems immediately. Shut down any machine that smokes, shocks, smells like it's burning, or otherwise appears to be malfunctioning.

STRESSED OUT? YOU'RE NOT ALONE

You work hard on the job, and then, if you're like many people, you go home and have to work some more. Although we may have all sorts of dreams about how we'd like to spend our time off work, the reality is that most working people are actually spending their off-work time tackling chores, caring for others, or running around doing errands.

"This leaves little time to re-energize our bodies and minds," says Marjorie Savage of The Hartford Financial Services Group, which conducted a survey to learn what workers would like to do with some extra free time. "A lack of downtime often leads to fatigue and increased levels of stress."

As Savage points out, constant high stress levels can affect your work performance and safety, lead to poor decisions and mistakes, and even cause illness.

So what can you do to reduce the stress in your life? Here are a few simple steps that can make a big difference:

- ☺ Get everyone in the family involved in household chores. It's good for kids to do their share. It makes them responsible.
- ☺ Don't expect perfection. Good enough is usually just fine.
- ☺ Set a little time aside to take a walk, soak in the tub, listen to music, or whatever helps you relax.
- ☺ Spend some quality time with family and/or friends each week.
- ☺ Worry less. Worry doesn't solve problems or improve your life. It just makes you stressed.

Hidden Hazards

One you might not have considered

There's one workplace hazard most people don't think about. That hazard is other workers who are not following safety rules.

For example, say a worker up on a ladder tosses a tool down to the ground without looking to see that someone is walking below. It isn't the tool that is responsible for the head injury to the guy on the ground. It's the guy up on the ladder who was careless and ignored the common sense safety rule that says you should wear a tool belt when you go up on a ladder so you can keep your tools in the belt when you're done with them, not toss them to the ground.

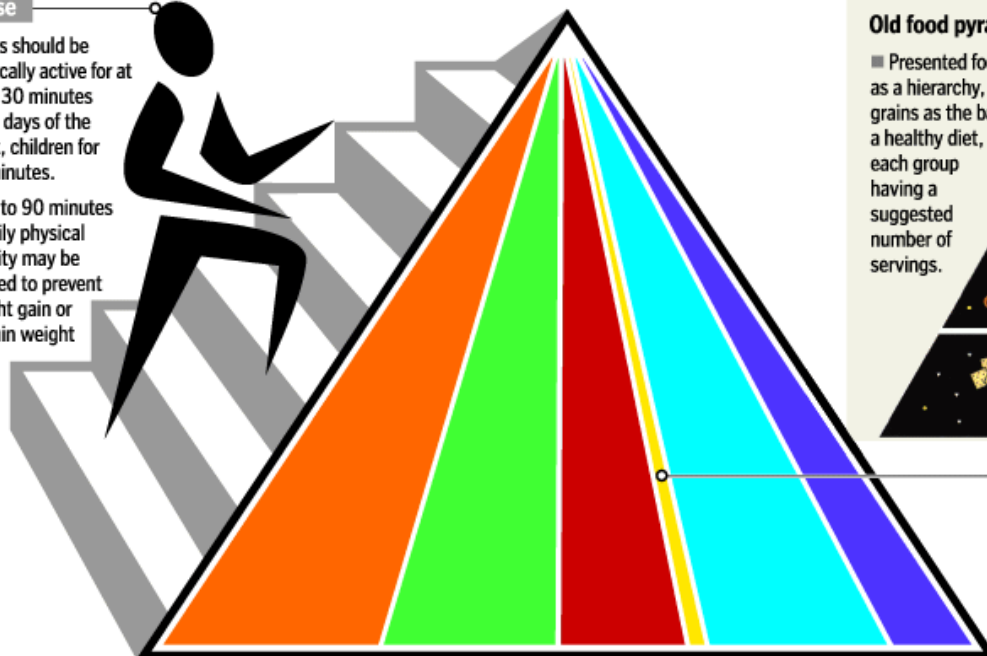
- **Don't take risks.** Make sure you know the safe way to do a job. If you're not sure, check with your supervisor before you start to work.
- **Talk to co-workers about safety**—yours and theirs. We're interdependent when it comes to safety. No one is truly safe if some people aren't working safely. Team up to make sure everybody knows and follows all the safety rules.
- **Make safety a priority.** Get involved in safety training and learn how to work safely. Make suggestions for ways to improve safety. Be a safety booster, not a hidden hazard.

Is Your Diet Healthy?

March is National Nutrition Month

Exercise

- Adults should be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week, children for 60 minutes.
- Sixty to 90 minutes of daily physical activity may be needed to prevent weight gain or sustain weight loss.



Old food pyramid

- Presented food groups as a hierarchy, with grains as the base of a healthy diet, and each group having a suggested number of servings.
- Emphasized limits on fats, oils and sweets, which were represented as the tip of the pyramid.



Oils

- Most fat should be from fish, nuts and vegetable oils.
- Limit solid fats, such as butter, margarine or lard.
- Keep consumption of saturated fats, trans fats and sodium low.
- Choose foods low in added sugar.

CATEGORY	Grains	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk	Meat and beans
RECOMMENDATION	Half of all grains consumed should be whole grains.	Vary the types of vegetables you eat.	Eat a variety of fruits. Go easy on juices.	Eat low-fat or fat-free dairy products.	Eat lean cuts, seafood and beans. Avoid frying.
DAILY AMOUNT	6 oz.	2.5 cups	2 cups	3 cups	5.5 oz.

Based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Recommended nutrient intakes at 12-calorie levels can be found on mypyramid.gov.