

Tool Box Talk No.75

Person Protective Equipment



What is PPE?

- 1 PPE is equipment or clothing worn to protect the user from known hazards in the workplace.
- 2 In construction, the commonly worn items of PPE are safety helmets and safety footwear.
- 3 Other examples of PPE are respirators, safety harnesses, ear-plugs, safety goggles, protective gloves and some clothing.

Limitations

- 1 PPE will only protect the user.
- 2 It must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions: do not misuse PPE.
- 3 The actual level of effectiveness is difficult to assess.
- 4 It must be in good condition to be fully effective: do not mistreat PPE, your health or life might depend on it.

Q: How much can your employer charge you for PPE?

What your employer must do

- 1 Assess the risks to employee's health and safety arising from the work activities.
- 2 Try to organise work activities so that PPE is not necessary.
- 3 Where PPE is necessary, select appropriate items that suit the wearer and are made to the required standard.
- 4 To supply employees with the necessary PPE at no cost.
- 5 Train employees to use it, and explain its limitations where this is necessary.
- 6 Ensure compatibility if more than one item of PPE is worn.
- 7 Ensure that PPE is maintained where appropriate.
- 8 Replace defective or lost PPE, at no cost to the user.

Q: What factors will determine the life of a safety helmet?

What you must do

- 1 Use PPE in accordance with instructions and training given.
- 2 Return PPE to its accommodation, where provided, after use.
- 3 Take reasonable care of your PPE and report its loss or defects to your employer.
- 4 Not work without PPE when it is known to be necessary.

Q: In which ways do you think that wearing PPE could increase the dangers to you?

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Do you have any questions for me?

Questions for you

Q: What should you do if you find an item of your PPE is damaged?

Q: What should you look for an item of PPE to confirm that it has been made to the required standard?

REMEMBER: PPE CAN BE A LIFE-SAVER; USE IT PROPERLY AND LOOK AFTER IT, AND IT SHOULD LOOK AFTER YOU.