

Know your clothing requirements

The clothes we choose to wear to work can either be a part of our protective gear or can help cause an accident. Be sure that your team is aware of the clothing requirements for various on-the-job activities. Caution them that clothing standards may vary dependent upon:

- Type of weather
- Type of work to be accomplished
- Type of work environment

As an example, heavy gloves are typically worn if a worker is handling uneven or rough equipment, gear or stock. Be that as it may, an employee was hurt when the finger of his glove was snagged and wound around a drill bit.

Footwear

Work footwear should:

- have thick soles with plenty of ankle support
- never be tattered or excessively worn

Features that are available in good, safe footwear are:

- skid-resistant soles
- chemical-resistant soles
- steel toes
- flexible steel insoles to protect from puncture
- waterproofing
- conduction-proof materials
- engineer boots have 15-inch sides designed to protect ankles from things such as climbing straps, brush or debris

Pants

- Pants should have an appropriate-length inseam and not be excessively lengthy. Workers can trip over the dragging material while descending a ladder or while stepping backward.
- Don't allow unhemmed or "cutoff" pants because trailing threads also cause a trip hazard.
- Pants should be constructed of a sturdy, flame-retardant fabric.

Shirts

- Shirts are designed to protect your upper body from the sun, work by-products such as spattered paint or dirt or abrasions.
- Don't allow any of your team to go without a shirt. It's more important to be protected than to work on a tan.

Soiled clothing hazards

Remind the team to keep clothing clean as much as possible. Clothes that are saturated with dirt or oil can be irritating to the skin, while oil- or grease-soaked clothes can easily catch fire.



Jewelry or accessories

Jewelry can get caught and cause a fall or an injury. Tell your team not to wear the following jewelry or accessories:

- bracelets
- dangling necklaces
- wallet chains
- watches
- rings

One worker had his finger pulled right off when he fell and caught his ring on machinery.

Even watches can get caught and cause a fall or an injury. If a watch must be worn, be sure that it is fastened with Velcro or another easily-detachable material.

Cold weather

- Wear sufficient clothing when the weather is cold.
- Because layers of clothing help trap body heat, two light layers protect more than a single heavy layer.
- Wool insulates better than cotton, and both are better than nylon because they wick away moisture and help keep you from getting chilled.
- Nylon is not flame retardant!

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Extras

Ask workers if they've witnessed a professional hockey player or other sports player in a game without protective gear. Tell them that they're professionals too and should wear appropriate clothing.

Remind your team that each job has safety equipment that should be worn. Examples of equipment that may be required for their safety are:

- hard hats
- safety goggles
- leather gloves
- hearing protection
- respirators
- leather sleeves

Be an example

Don't forget to wear your protective gear. Set a good example for your team.

Start the conversation

- What type of clothing or protective gear does this job require?
- What types of gloves need to be worn? Is there an instance where they should not be worn?
- Can anyone recall a serious accident that occurred because of incorrect clothing?

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