Vital GRP

Hard Hats

Prepare: Quiet location? No distractions? Talk aids ready?

Reason: To remind everybody of the importance, use and

maintenance of a hard hat.

Why: To try and stop head injuries

Outline: This talk will cover what you should and should

not do with a hard hat and why you should wear one.



Overview

- In construction, a hard hat is a critical piece of personal protection. It is the last line of defence against objects impacting one of your most vital assets - your head. If your hard hat is not in good condition or used properly, the consequences could be tragic
- The slightest damage to any part of the brain will cause malfunction of some area of the body. The skull, under normal circumstances, protects the brain. But when a possibility of injury from falling or flying objects exists, additional protection is
- · required.
- Hard hats not only reduce the chances of serious injury resulting from falling objects but protect you when you bump your head on things — like machinery, ductwork, and steelworks

Q: What does a hard hat protect you from?

How to care for hard hats

- The better care you take of your hard hat, the better care it will take of you.
- Properly adjust suspension systems to maintain clearance between your head and the shell of the hat.
- Keep your hard hat clean and free of solvents, adhesives, grease, and oil.

NOTES		

For more information
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The usual maintenance for headgear is to try and keep your hat clean, removing dirt and stains with a mild detergent, like washing-up liquid. Give it a good rinse in warm water and check the hat for any scratches or damage. You don't have to spend hours doing this - a minute or two every so often to check everything is working should be enough.

The Do's and Don'ts of Head Protection

DO:

- Replace headgear that is pitted, holed, cracked or brittle.
- Replace headgear that has been subjected to a blow even though damage cannot be seen.
- Remove from service any headgear if its serviceability is in doubt.
- Replace headgear and components according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Consult regulations or your supplier for information on headgear.
- Check the expiry date which can be found under the visor.

DON'T:

- Don't cut holes for ventilation.
- Don't heat and bend.
- Don't substitute a "bump cap." They aren't strong enough.
- Don't paint your hard hat.
- Don't put anything under it except your head or purpose made PPE.
- Don't wear it backwards.

Q: When should you replace your hard hat?

Use of Hoodies

When worn as per **image A**, these garments can:

- Restrict your vision, particularly peripheral vision.
- Limit your ability to hear warnings or oncoming plant.

Sources: <u>Using personal protective equipment (PPE) to control risks at work: Overview - HSE Personal protective equipment (PPE) at work regulations from 6 April 2022</u>

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Can compromise the performance of other PPE (e.g., ear defence, safety eyewear)

Where required, a purpose made balaclava image B should be worn. When selecting these, consider the following:

- Size and fit for the user.
- Thermal properties
- Compatibility with other PPE
- Perforated area for ears
- Fire retardant properties
- Reflective properties

Q: How can wearing a hoodie under your Hard Hat compromise your safety?

Some common complaints and the truth

"It's too heavy." Hard hats are only a few ounces heavier than a cloth cap.

"It's too hot." Measurements taken in hot weather show that the temperature under a hard hat is often cooler than it is outside.

"It gives me a headache." A thump on the head from something which has fallen two floors will give you a worse one. There is, however, no medical reason why a properly adjusted hard hat should cause a headache. Don't alter the suspension system on the hard hat because you won't get the designed protection.

"It won't stay on." A chin strap will solve this problem. Otherwise, you will find that a hard hat stays put if it's fitted properly.

The hard hat is a useful piece of safety equipment. But it must be properly adjusted and worn and kept

Questions for you

Q: Why should you wear your chin strap?



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Hard Hat images A



