The Basics of Head Protection

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Few injuries are more fatal or more damaging than head injuries. Concussions, brain injuries, permanent or temporary brain damage are just a few of the possible outcomes of a blow to the head. Additionally, workers who are exposed to potential electric shock need to protect against that as well. Basic to any workers Personal Protective Equipment is the hard hat. Hard hats are designed to protect workers against electrical hazards, burns, falling objects, collisions with fixed objects and flying debris.

Points to Remember:

How do I know if I need to be wearing a hard hat?

a. Is there a possibility that something might fall from overhead?

b. Are there any exposed electrical components (wiring, conductors, etc.…) that might encounter your head?

c. Are there fixed objects that are low enough that they might be bumped into?

If you answered "yes" to anyone of these questions, then you should be wearing a hard hat.

Hard hats are tested to withstand the impact of an eight-pound weight dropped five feet.

That impact is about the same as two-pound wrench or hammer falling twenty feet and striking your head.

All the information on the rating can be found on the inside tag or sticker of your hard hat.

As an object falls it picks up speed and force. While it may be hard to believe, even an object as small as a washer or bolt can inflict massive damage to your brain if it strikes your unprotected head.

Your hard hat is designed to deflect falling or flying objects and to absorb some of the shock of impact.

Additional shock is absorbed by the suspension system, which distributes the force over a larger area of the head and neck.

Hard hats, when fitted correctly, should not bind, slip, fall off or irritate the skin. Always follow the manufacturers instructions for proper fitting procedures.

Before wearing, carefully inspect the hard hat, including all components and accessories, for any signs of damage. Look for dents, cracks, holes due to penetration, or any other damage due to impact, wear, or rough treatment.

Any hard hat that has received an impact may have a reduced ability to protect a worker and should be removed from service

Contact your manager immediately if a replacement hard hat is needed.

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