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Be safe and healthy on the job at with these helpful tips provided by Cool Insuring Agency, Inc..

Choosing Safety Work Gloves

Protect your hands to reduce on-the-job injuries

A recent study found that wearing gloves on the construction site reduced the relative risk of injury by 60 percent. While you may have no doubt about the need to wear gloves on the job, choosing the right pair may not be so simple. Balance your specific needs with the characteristics of each type of glove in order to determine which pair is right for the task.

Factors to Consider

1. Fit

- Measure your hand circumference around the palm or at the base of the fingers. The number of inches will determine your size.

2. Continuous Wear

- Thin, disposable gloves allow for closer, detailed work that requires the use of your fingertips.
- Thin gloves with natural rubber, nitrile, pVC or polyurethane are not as cut resistant as other gloves, but they are easier to work in and are better for a variety of small-scale tasks.

3. Oily Grip

- Wear sponge or foam-coated gloves that allow you to have a solid grip on slippery objects. Oil penetrates these types of gloves, making objects easier to hold. This prevents you from dropping objects that could cause injury to hands or other body parts.

4. Cut resistance

- Gloves that offer sponge nitrile coatings with a cut-resistant liner of yarns such as Kevlar or high-performance polyethylene offer both oily grip and cut resistance. These gloves are perfect for sheet metal or other materials that present multiple hazards.
- Some gloves have stainless steel or fiberglass yarn for higher cut resistance. However, no glove protects against serrated or moving blades.

5. Durability

- Wear cotton or leather gloves, preferably with coating, when handling abrasive or heavy objects. Gloves coated with NRL, PVC, nitrile, neoprene and polyurethane outwear normal cotton and leather gloves by two to 10 times.
- Gloves with coating offer the least amount of dexterity, so choose a pair with lighter-weight coatings, palm-coating or flat-dipped gloves.

6. Chemical resistance

- When handling Portland cement, wear chemical-resistant gloves that are fully coated with chemical-resistant polymers such as nitrile, neoprene or PVC, which protect from hexavalent chromium.

Keep the Gloves On!

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hand injuries account for more than 1 million emergency room visits by workers per year in the United States. Don't be the next worker on the way to the hospital – get the right gloves for the job.

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safety matters
Construction
Toolbox Talks for
From your safety partners at Cool Insuring Agency, Inc.

Keep the Worksite Safe with PPE

In 2012, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 817 cases of workplace fatality in the construction industry alone—that's more than two deaths every day. Within the industry, specialty trade contractors, heavy construction and civil engineering construction topped the list with the most on-the-job deaths.

One of the most important things workers can do to stay out of harm's way on the job is to use personal protective equipment (PPE) properly. While follows all government regulations regarding PPE and maintains American National Standards where required, it is also important that employees do their part.

Foot protection, which includes steel-toe boots, safety-toe boots, steel-capped boots or safety shoes, is a must for all workers in the presence of heavy machinery. It will also protect your feet from falling objects and puncture wounds from below. They may also help you keep stable footing in inclement weather. Most shoes will have symbols on the outside to illustrate the type of protection the footwear offers.

Head protection is required in areas with the danger of head impact, falling or flying objects and electrical shock or burn.

Though it is often overlooked, **hearing protection** is crucial in a construction environment to prevent permanent damage. Remember that plain cotton is not an acceptable form of ear protection.

When there is a chance of physical, chemical or radiation damage to the eyes or face, you must wear appropriate PPE. Everyday glasses do not qualify and are no excuse for lack of proper protection—request eye and face PPE that fits over glasses.

Respiratory protection is one of the most important pieces of PPE for a construction worker, so it is important for you to understand how to use this PPE properly and what its limitations are.

All lifelines, safety belts and lanyards used for employee safeguarding may not be used for loading or load testing. These PPE items are crucial in protecting against falls, and equipment may be damaged by improper use.

 will provide safety nets when workplaces are more than 25 feet above ground or water surface or where other fall protection is deemed impractical. Know that you should not begin work until the safety nets have been properly installed and tested.

Often times, workers don't wear their safety equipment because it's a nuisance to put on or because it's bulky and uncomfortable. It can be tempting not to put PPE on at all unless the safety supervisor is looking, but ultimately, it is up to you to be a professional and recognize the life-saving benefits of PPE.

A poorly fitted piece of protective equipment can cause headache or pain, and if it does, see your supervisor immediately to have it adjusted or re-fitted. But most of the time, it's just a matter of getting used to wearing these items. This is a lot easier when you remember that, like the football player, you stand a better chance of continuing successfully with your job and your home life if you are protected from possible serious injury by protective equipment.

Construction workers consistently have the highest fatality rate of any private-sector industry. Protect yourself from harm with PPE.

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Safety Matters

Talking Points for

Cool Insuring Agency, Inc.: Your construction workplace safety partner

Constructing Masonry Walls

Constructing concrete and masonry walls is extremely dangerous because the loads are heavy. Workers are at risk both when slabs and walls are positioned by jacks and lifting equipment, and when shoring is required until structures can support themselves. For example, if you are working near a free-standing masonry block wall and there are gusting winds, it could collapse on you or your co-workers. Follow these safety tips to ensure an injury-free workday.

Shoring and Reshoring

- Inspect all shoring equipment prior to use. Damaged equipment should never be used.
- If equipment is weakened during use, it should be immediately reinforced.
- Adjustments of single-post shores to raise formwork should not be made after concrete placement.

Reinforcing Steel

- Prevent unrolled wire mesh from recoiling by securing each end or turning the roll over.
- Reinforcing steel for walls, piers, columns and similar structures should be properly supported to prevent collapse.
- All protruding reinforcing steel must be guarded.

Framework Removal

- Do not remove forms and shores until the concrete has gained enough strength to support its weight and superimposed loads.
- Reshoring should not be removed until the concrete being supported has reached ample strength to support its weight and all loads placed upon it.

Precast Concrete

- Wall units, structural framing and tilt-up wall panels must be adequately supported to prevent overturning and collapse until permanent connections are put into place.
- Only essential employees should be underneath precast concrete being placed into position.

Lift-Slab Operations

- Do not overload jacking equipment.
- Unless you are essential to the jacking operation, do not enter the building/structure or stand beneath a slab being lifted.

General Safety Requirements

- Do not place construction loads on a concrete structure unless a person qualified in structural design determines that the structure is capable of supporting the load.
- Do not stand behind the jack during tensioning operations.
- Steer clear of working under concrete buckets that are in motion. Never ride a concrete bucket.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the head and face must always be worn when applying a cement, sand and water mixture through a pneumatic hose.
- Use automatic holding devices to support forms in case a lifting mechanism falls.
- Do not enter the constructing and lifting worksite unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Above all, always work with a cautious eye!

Though they are made of sturdy materials, concrete and masonry walls are not stable until permanent supporting materials are in place.

Exercise caution around these structures to reduce your risk of injury.

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Top Four Construction Hazards

Do you know the risks?

You're good at your job and you love what you do. However, every time you come to work, you risk suffering an injury. The construction site is one of the most hazardous workplaces, and many of the injuries that occur there are caused by these top four hazards: falls, struck-by, caught-in/between and electrocutions.

When you have sufficient knowledge, preventing accidents caused by these hazards is easier than you might think. Here are some basic safety tips to keep you injury-free.

Preventing Falls

- Wear and use fall arrest equipment.
- Install and maintain perimeter protection.
- Cover and secure all floor openings and label floor opening covers.
- Use ladders and scaffolds safely.

Preventing Struck-bys

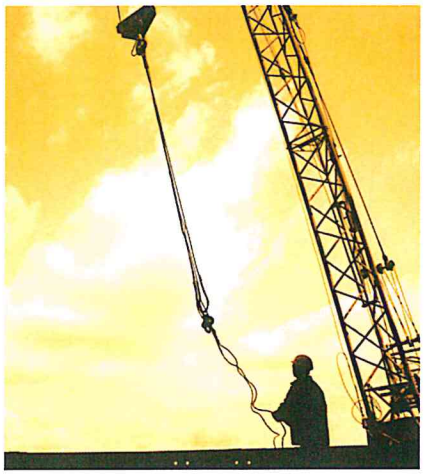
- Never position yourself between moving and fixed objects.
- Wear high-visibility clothes near equipment and vehicles so that others can see you clearly.

Preventing Caught-in-between Hazards

- Never enter an unprotected trench or excavation that is five feet or deeper without an adequate protective system in place. (Note: some trenches that are less than five feet may need a similar system as well.)
- Make sure that a trench or excavation is protected either by sloping, shoring, benching or a trench shield system.

Preventing Electrocutions

- Locate and identify utilities before starting work for the day.
- Look for overhead power lines when operating any equipment.
- Maintain a safe distance away from power lines and learn your area's distance requirements.
- Do not operate portable electric tools unless they are grounded or double-insulated.
- Use ground-fault circuit interrupters for protection.
- Be alert to electrical hazards when working with ladders, scaffolds or other platforms.



The List Goes On

Though these top four hazards are the most common on construction sites, you are exposed to many more dangers on a daily basis. To remain safe, be an active participant in all safety initiatives and trainings at and keep safety at the top of your mind every day.

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