

21. Personal Protective Equipment

It is the City of Mercer Island's policy to provide employees with protective equipment while performing tasks that present a potential for injury. Personal protective equipment includes equipment for the eyes, face, head, and extremities and consists of protective shields, barriers, clothing, and respiratory devices.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program

Supervisors are required to assess the hazards of each job task and determine what PPE is necessary for tasks that present a potential for injury. Supervisors must document the hazard assessment for PPE when scheduling the job task. This must be completed prior to starting the job task, or whenever there are any changes in conditions, tools, or processes. Employees are required to wear PPE as instructed by their supervisor to safely perform their job task, and supervisors will notify employees of the PPE requirements for specific job tasks prior to beginning any work. Required PPE will be provided to employees at no cost. Employees are responsible for maintaining PPE in clean working condition according to the manufacturer's instructions, testing PPE before each use, and requesting new PPE as needed. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that appropriate PPE is available to employees, training employees in PPE use, care, and replacement, and enforcing PPE requirements.

Head Protection

Employees exposed to hazards that could cause a head injury, such as falling, propelled objects, head bumping situations, or electrical conductors, shall wear hard hats. Persons working in shops around machinery or in locations which do not constitute a head injury risk hazard may wear a cloth cap at the discretion of their supervisor. Employees working in the right-of-way and exposed to moving traffic may wear a brightly colored cap. Required head protection must meet the specifications of the American National Safety Institute (ANSI) Z89.1-1986, (ANSI) Z89.1-2003, and (ANSI) Z89.1-2009.

Eye and Face Protection

Prior to work in any area with potential exposure to hazardous materials/chemicals, the nearest eyewash shall be identified and communicated to all employees. Safety glasses that are ANSI Z87.1 approved) will be worn at all times while performing tasks where particles could hit eyes. Examples of these hazards include:

- Flying particles
- Molten metal
- Liquid chemicals
- Acids or caustic liquids
- Chemical gases or vapors
- Any light that could injure the eyes such as lasers, ultraviolet, or infrared light
- Objects that puncture
- Blood and other potentially infectious body fluids that might splash, spray, or splatter

Supervisors are responsible for identifying and providing appropriate eye protection in special eye hazard work areas (such as welding, torch cutting, lasers etc.). ANSI approved eye wear shall be worn over prescription glasses for access to project work areas until permanent protective eyewear can be obtained. Goggles shall be worn if the potential for fine particles or chemical hazards exists. Visitors invited to City shop areas where eye protection is required shall be provided with approved goggles or glasses. Face shields shall be worn when grinding and handling acids, other hazardous chemicals, or hot liquids/grease

that could splash. Face shields will be worn when cleaning spills of blood or potentially infectious materials when there is a splash hazard.

Hearing Protection

The City has established and maintains a hearing conservation program (see Chapter 10) which includes an audiometric testing program for all employees whose exposure to noise on the job equals or exceeds an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dB (decibels). Supervisors are required to enforce employee use of PPE during tasks that have been identified through audiometric testing to warrant hearing protection.

Respiratory Protection

The City has established and maintains a Respiratory Protection Program (see Chapter 13) that uses exposure monitoring to determine specific tasks that require the use of a respirator. All employees covered by the respiratory protection program shall be trained, medically evaluated, fitted, and supplied with an appropriate respirator for their scope of work.

Hand Protection

Gloves are the most commonly used type of PPE, and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that employees wear appropriate gloves while participating in tasks that pose the following risks:

- Working with harmful substances that can burn or be absorbed by the skin
- Tasks that pose a severe laceration or puncture risk
- Harmful extreme temperatures

The type of required glove will be determined by the task, present conditions, duration of use, and potential hazards. Employees are responsible for disposing of single-use hand PPE after each use.

Leg and Foot Protection

Custodial and maintenance employees shall wear full length pants. Overalls or pants must not have loose, torn or dragging fabric, and pointed tools shall not be carried in pockets. Employees may choose to wear a canvas or leather tool sheath hung from the belt.

Employees who work in areas where there is a possibility of foot injury shall wear safety-type footwear. Substantial footwear, made of leather or other equally firm material with a safety toe, shall be worn by employees where there is risk of injury to the feet from falling, rolling, or moving objects, or from burning, scalding, cutting, penetration or like hazards. Tennis shoes are not considered as substantial or safety-type footwear. Employees who are furnished safety footwear by the City shall be required to wear their safety shoes or boots during working hours.

Roadside Protection

Other protective clothing for working along roadsides may be required by supervision and consists of highly visible or luminous colored vests and/or outer garments, hard hats, etc. so employees are readily apparent to motorists or other vehicle operators.