

PPE: The Last Line of Defense

TRADE: GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

LEADER GUIDE: 8-12 MINUTES

USE WHAT FITS TODAY

LEADER NOTE

Do not read this sheet word-for-word. Pick the sections that match today's task, point to the actual equipment/work area, and get the crew to answer the questions out loud.

WHY THIS MATTERS

PPE helps when hazards cannot be fully eliminated, but it only works when it is selected correctly, fits and is actually worn. PPE matters when a hazard cannot be fully eliminated or controlled another way, but the protection has to match the exposure and fit the person using it. The crew should know what each item protects against, its limits, and what condition means it cannot be used.

A SCENARIO TO DISCUSS

A worker preparing for PPE: The Last Line of Defense finds that the required PPE is damaged, contaminated, poorly fitted, or conflicts with another piece of protection. Production is ready to start. What has to be corrected first?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

- Identify the actual exposure and confirm why the selected PPE is required for this task.
- Inspect fit, condition, cleanliness/contamination and compatibility with other PPE before use.
- Confirm required training, fit testing, medical evaluation or manufacturer limitations where applicable.
- Match PPE to the hazard rather than using the same gear for every task.
- Inspect PPE before use and replace damaged, worn or contaminated equipment.

SAFE WORK SEQUENCE / CONTROLS

- Match PPE to the hazard rather than using the same gear for every task.
- Inspect PPE before use and replace damaged, worn or contaminated equipment.
- Wear PPE correctly and adjust it so it stays in place during the task.
- Keep PPE clean and store it so it is not damaged between shifts.
- Remember that PPE does not replace guards, ventilation, fall protection or other primary controls.

QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD CHANGE THE JOB

1. What exposure are we protecting against today, and why is this specific PPE appropriate for that exposure?
2. What must be inspected for fit, damage, contamination, compatibility, or expiration before the PPE is used?
3. What part of the hazard is NOT controlled by the PPE, and what engineering/work-practice control still has to be in place?

COMMON FAILURE POINTS

- Wearing PPE that is damaged, contaminated, poorly fitted or incompatible because it is the only set nearby.
- Treating PPE as the primary control when the hazard should first be reduced by engineering or work-practice controls.
- Continuing after the exposure changes beyond what the selected PPE was chosen to handle.

STOP AND RESET IF...

- Required PPE is missing, damaged, contaminated, incompatible with other equipment, or does not fit correctly.
- The exposure changes so the selected PPE no longer provides the protection required.
- A worker has not received required training/fit testing/medical evaluation for equipment that depends on those requirements.

4. What condition during the task would require the PPE to be replaced, upgraded, cleaned, or the work stopped?
5. What has to be corrected first?

MAKE IT REAL ON THE JOB

Have the crew inspect the actual PPE, explain what each item protects against, and identify one limitation of that protection.

BEFORE YOU RELEASE THE CREW

Before the crew starts, everyone should be able to explain the hazard, point to the control being used today, and name the condition that would make the work stop.



ATTENDANCE & SIGN-OFF

PPE: The Last Line of Defense

Project / Job:		Date:	
Talk leader:		Location:	

CREW ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing, attendees confirm they participated in this toolbox talk and had the opportunity to raise job-specific questions. Signatures do not replace required training, qualifications, permits or certifications.

#	Name	Company / Trade	Signature
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QUESTIONS / CONDITIONS / CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

END-OF-TALK CHECK

☐ Crew can point to the main hazard.	☐ Critical control is in place and usable.
☐ The responsible person/check is clear.	☐ Stop/re-brief conditions were discussed.