

HEAD PROTECTION

The most common head protection comes in the form of a hard hat. There are two types, Type I and Type II. Type I hard hats offer you protection against falling objects and blows to the top of the head. Type II hard hats also protect against lateral blows to the head.

Hard hats come in three different classes Class E (Electrical), Class G (General) and Class C (Conductive). Class E hard hats will provide you with the greatest protection against electrical hazards. These can protect you from high-voltage shock and burns and current reaching 20,000 volts.

Class G hard hats can offer protection against electrical hazards of up to 2,200 volts. Class C hard hats are conductive to be worn around explosive substances. Do not wear a Class C hard hat around electrical hazards.

One other form of head protection is a bump hat. Bump hats provide you protection in areas with low clearance. This type of PPE will offer no protection from falling objects or electrical hazards.

Whenever you are selecting head protection, it is important that it fits properly. Most hard hats come in multiple sizes and have adjustable headbands to ensure a proper fit. According to OSHA, a proper fit should allow sufficient clearance between the shell and the suspension system for 18 ventilation and distribution of an impact. The hat should not bind, slip, fall off or irritate your skin.

Inspect head protection daily and clean it periodically with mild soap and water. Check the suspension system and other accessories for holes, cracks, tears or other damage. In the event that you observe any of these conditions, do not use the head protection as the integrity has been compromised. Tag it and remove it from service.

If you observe perforations, cracking, deformity of the brim or shell or exposure to heat, chemicals or radiation, do not use and remove from surface. Always replace head protection after an impact from a falling object.

Avoid keeping your hard hat in direct sunlight. Never drill holes, paint or apply any labels to protective headgear. Be aware that paints, paint thinners and some cleaning agents can compromise the protective quality of your hard hats or head protection.



DISCUSSION QUESTION

What should you do if you observe perforations, cracking, deformity of the brim or shell on a hard hat?