



Discussion leader duties for this session:

Obtain a spare hardhat and a small hammer for a demonstration. Also, read the label in your hardhat and note its type and class.

What this Safety Talk covers:

The advantages of wearing a hardhat, and why they are required.

Discussion notes :

039: Hardhats

When to wear

Wear your hardhat any time you are on the job site, other than in an office or trailer.

Types and classes of hardhats

Type I hats reduce impact from a blow to the top of the head.

Type II hats reduce impact from a wider range of blows.

Class C hats provide no electrical protection.

Class E hats provide protection from high voltage, and are proof-tested to 20,000V.

Class G hats provide protection from low voltage, and are proof-tested to 2200V.

What the hard hat does for you

Your hardhat helps identify you, thus improving security for everyone.

It provides some protection from falling objects, arcs, and objects your head might strike in close quarters. Your hat protects you from impact only if you have not altered the suspension system by placing things (other than a cold weather liner) between the suspension and the shell. Ensure your suspension isn't so loose it wobbles and not so tight it pinches your skin.

It is mechanically protective to the extent you have maintained the shell integrity. This means you cannot drill holes into it or alter the shell in any way. The solvents in paint can weaken the hat. Crystal clear acrylic spray may be acceptable, but get approval from your safety director before use.

It is electrically protective to the extent you have maintained shell integrity plus insulating properties. The more you alter the surface of the hat, the less protection it provides. Ink, pencil marks, paint, and paper create conductive paths on the hat, so keep writing and stickers to a minimum.

It keeps you cool. Measurements taken in hot weather show that the temperature in a properly worn hardhat is often less than the temperature outside. That's due to a combination of airflow, evaporation, and shading.

What you should do for your hard hat

Properly adjust the suspension system.

Leave the shell intact. Don't drill holes in it, and don't swath it in stickers or other decorations.

Store it in a clean place out of the path of concentrated sunlight. Your car's rear window is not such a place.

Wash it with warm soapy water, and rinse the soap off thoroughly, when the hat shows signs of dirt accumulation. Wash the sweatbands and cradles, too.

Replace the suspension system if it is worn or damaged.

Replace the hat if it has dents, cracks, or signs of wear.

Replace the hat if it's been subjected to an impact. It might not have been damaged, but you don't know for sure.

Review and Discussion

When should you wear your hardhat?

What is the type and class of the hardhat you are wearing? Is it correct for the kind of work you are doing?

How does a hardhat protect you mechanically?

How does a hardhat protect you electrically?

What must you do to ensure the integrity of this electrical protection?

Can a hardhat increase your hot weather comfort? Why?

Why is the suspension system important, and what must you do to ensure it works for you?

How should you store your hard-hat?

When should you replace your hardhat?

What are some “don’ts” for hard-hats?

Don'ts

Don't heat it or bend it, and don't modify the visor.

Don't use the area between your head and the shell as a storage bin.

Don't wear it backwards or sideways. The front brim is designed as eye and face protection.

Demonstration

Have a volunteer wear the sample hard hat, adjusted properly. Tap the hat with the hammer, but don't use much force. You can get the point across without causing a neck injury! Ask the crew members present if anyone wants to volunteer to do this trick without the hat. Note that the hat, having absorbed the impact, may be damaged and should be replaced.

Participant's Signature and Date

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