OSHA Personal Protective Equipment Standard

Highlights of the new OSHA Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Standard, effective July 5, 1994, include the following:

- Standard covers 11.7 million workers at 1.7 million workplaces who should be wearing some type of PPE. Top industries with employees at risk are transportation and equipment manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, electric and electronic manufacturing, automotive trade and services, machinery and computer manufacturing. Construction sites are not covered by the Standard.
- Standard addresses head, eye and face, hand and foot protection.

This OSHA Standard addresses head, eye and face, hand and foot protection.

Requirements include:

- Employer must conduct walk-through surveys or other assessments to identify hazards requiring the use of PPE. Written documentation of the survey must be completed and maintained by the employer.
- Hazards requiring the use of eye and face protection include flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, and potentially dangerous light radiation.
- Helmets should be worn where there is potential danger of falling objects, or electrical shock from exposed electrical conductors.
- Foot protection should be worn if there is a danger of falling and rolling objects, objects piercing the sole, or electrical hazards.
- Hand protection should be worn when employees are exposed to hazardous substances, severe cuts or lacerations, severe abrasions, punctures, chemical burns, thermal burns, and temperature extremes.
- If hazards exist, employers must outfit each affected employee with properly fitting PPE.
- Every employee who wears PPE must be trained in the basics of how to use and maintain the gear, its limitations, what jobs require PPE, and what kind of PPE must be used. Employers must document training.
- PPE purchased after July 5, 1994 must meet performance and design requirements set by various ANSI standards.
- Eye and face protection must comply with ANSI Z87.1-1989; protective helmets with ANSI Z89.1 - 1986; protective footwear with ANSI Z41 - 1991. There is no ANSI standard for gloves and other forms of hand protection.
- Employers don't have to worry about PPE bought before July 5, 1994 as long as it complies with ANSI standards referenced in the original 1971 PPE Standard.

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(Requirements Included—continued)

- Employers must complete assessments and employee training by 7/5/94.
- Eye protection used against flying particles must have side shields. Employees wearing prescription lenses who face eye hazards must use either prescription safety glasses or eye protection worn over regular glasses. Contact lenses pose no special hazards, but are not a substitute for eye protection.
- With regard to head protection, norestrictions are placed on the use of bump caps. OSHA, however, will evaluate an employer's choice of head protection based on existing hazards.
- Total annual compliance costs will be$52.4 million. Most worksites will spend less than $100 to comply.
- Hardest hit employers will be automotive service employers and print operations.
- Standard should prevent 4 fatalities and 102,000 injuries (including 37,924 lost workday cases) annually.
- Employers should save more than $150 million annually, based on a conservative estimate of $4000 per lost workday injury.
- Existing PPE is "grandfathered" by Standard.

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