



Company Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Topic 22: Hard Hats

Introduction: Most head injuries are caused by flying or falling objects, or by bumping your head against something. Hard hats must resist penetration, absorb the shock of a blow, and provide protection against electrical shock. The prevention of head injuries is an important factor in every safety program. Controlling the hazards that lead to head injuries are usually difficult to anticipate, so hard hats must be used to eliminate these risks.

Federal OSHA regulations state: Helmets for the protection of employees against impact and penetration of falling and flying objects shall meet the specifications contained in the ANSI Safety Requirements for Head Protection (Z89.1&2).

A recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) survey showed: Most workers who suffered impact injuries to the head were performing their normal jobs, at their regular work-sites, but were not wearing head protection. Most of those injured were not required to wear a hard hat.

■ **Employers must ensure** that their employees wear head protection if any of the following apply:

- Objects might fall from above and strike them on the head.
- They might strike their head against fixed objects.
- There is a possibility of accidental head contact with electrical hazards.



Proper selection is an important factor in providing adequate protection: Protective headgear must meet ANSI Standard Z89.1-1986 (*Protective Headgear for Industrial Workers*), or provide equivalent protection.

Types of Protective Head Gear: Hard hat **TYPE** designations (1 and 2) determine helmet shape.

- **TYPE — 1** These hard hats have a full brim of not less than one and one-quarter inches wide.
- **TYPE — 2** These hard hats are brim-less, except for a front bill, and have a peak ridge extending forward from the crown.

NOTE: Another type of protective headgear on the market is called a “bump hat,” designed for use in areas with low head clearance. They are used to protect against head bumps and lacerations, but do not protect against falling or flying objects, and are not approved for use by ANSI.

■ **Electrical Classes of Protective Head Gear:** Hard hat **CLASS** designations G, E, and C determine recognized service values and are available in both types.

- **CLASS — G Hard Hats:** Are designated as general service, limited voltage protection, and are intended for protection against impact hazards. They are used in mining, building construction, shipbuilding, tunneling, timber and lumber operations, and manufacturing.
- **CLASS — E Hard Hats:** Are designated as utility service, high voltage helmets and are intended for protection against impact and penetration from falling or flying objects and from high voltage shock and burn. They are used extensively by electrical workers.
- **CLASS — C Hard Hats:** Are designated as special service with no voltage protection. Known as safety hats, caps, or bump helmets, they are specifically designed for lightweight comfort and impact protection. They are normally used in certain construction and manufacturing occupations, oil fields, refineries, chemical plants where there is little danger of falling objects or electrical hazards. They are used where there is the risk of bumping your head against fixed objects.



■ Head protection that is either too large or too small is inappropriate for use, even if it meets all other requirements. Protective headgear must fit properly on the head, and should be accompanied by clear instructions explaining proper adjustment and replacement of the suspension and headband.

■ Hard hats may be equipped with, or designed for, attached accessories to help employees deal with changing environmental conditions, such as slots for earmuffs, or face shields. The headgear must be designed for these accessories by the manufacturer, and must never be altered by the employee in any way, such as drilling or cutting.

Conclusion: Make sure your protective head gear is appropriate for the risks you may encounter on the job. Your hard hat should fit properly, and be cleaned, maintained, and inspected regularly. If for any reason you suspect the safety values of your hard hat were compromised in any way, replace it immediately. Avoid the risk of a head injury; your hard hat does you no good if it is not worn.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Material Safety Data Sheets Reviewed: _____ (Name of Chemical)

Employee Signatures: _____
(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

Foreman/Supervisor's Signature: _____

These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.