

SECTION 15.0 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

15.1 Policy

The requirements for and use of personal protective equipment is outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations. Every employee must wear personal protective equipment and clothing approved and appropriate for his/her protection under normal work circumstances.

In areas where Regional uniforms, protective clothing, and personal protective equipment are issued, they shall be worn and maintained in good condition.

All personal protective equipment used in the Halton Region will meet applicable Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards.

15.2 Purpose

To provide guidelines to assist management in the implementation and maintenance of a successful personal protective equipment policy and program.

- 15.3** It is management's responsibility to ensure that the required personal protective equipment is adequate to protect against the hazards of the assigned tasks.
- 15.4** The supervisor is to ensure employees are trained in the proper fit, care and use of the personal protective equipment, and to ensure that the equipment is maintained in good working order.
- 15.5** Personal protective equipment whenever practical, should be chosen in consultation with the applicable Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- 15.6** It is the employee's responsibility to advise his or her supervisor of any broken or defective personal protective equipment, as soon as possible. The supervisor will take all necessary steps to correct or relieve the problem immediately.
- 15.7** It is management's responsibility to develop Department or site-specific policies and procedures for specific personal protective equipment, as required.

15.8 The following guidelines were prepared to assist management in assessing the need for personal protective equipment where it may not be specifically required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations.

- a) Eye protection is required where there is a hazard from operating machinery, or there is a potential for flying objects, dust, bio-hazardous substances or chemicals to enter the eye, or whenever there is a risk of eye injury. Refer to the Corporate Standard for eyewear.
- b) Head protection is required where there is a hazard of head injury from falling or flying objects, among other hazards. CSA approved hard hats must be worn on construction and demolition sites, or as required by legislation. Hard hats shall not be drilled, painted, defaced with unapproved stickers, or worn reversed. Other protective headgear, such as bump caps or sunhats, may be worn based on the risk assessment of the job hazards.
- c) Foot protection is required where there is a hazard with a potential to cause foot or toe injuries. CSA protective footwear shall be Grade 1, green patch, steel-toed boots or shoes with puncture resistant soles, unless the job task and related hazards dictate other CSA approved footwear. Employees will be supplied approved rubber boots, hip or chest waders, as required.
- d) Hand protection is required where there is a danger of cuts, abrasions or punctures from handling sharp or jagged materials, corrosives, solvents, other chemicals, hot or cold objects, or biological hazards. A risk assessment will be conducted to determine the appropriate type of hand protection.
- e) Hearing protection is required where an employee is exposed to a sound level greater than 85 decibels. Measures shall be taken to reduce the sound level below 85 decibels. Clearly visible warning signs must be posted by supervision at approaches to areas where the sound level is more than 85 decibels. The signs must state the daily exposure for the particular sound and that hearing protection must be worn. Noise level testing must be conducted, as required.
- f) Respiratory protection is required where a hazardous gas, vapour, dust or fume, biological hazard or an oxygen content of less than 18 percent, or more than 23 percent at atmospheric pressure exists, and where the work area cannot be purged or ventilated to provide and maintain a safe atmosphere.

Respiratory protection should be approved to protect against the inhalation hazards associated with specific tasks.

Fit testing of respiratory equipment shall be performed every two (2) years, as dictated by standard, or more often as physical body changes dictate.

- g) Traffic safety vests or approved alternatives are required for all Halton Region employees engaged in construction projects, providing maintenance activities on a public thoroughfare, directing traffic or who are endangered by vehicular traffic in the operation of their job function.
- h) Hard hats and appropriate footwear will be worn at all times while on a construction site.
- i) An approved form of fall arrest shall be supplied and worn by all employees who could fall more than 3 metres (10 feet) in the performance of their job.
- j) Employees working near or in liquid of sufficient depth to cause drowning must be provided with and must wear an approved form of personal flotation device if the job task and related hazards warrant and/or dictate.
- k) High visibility rainwear will be provided and worn based on the specific job hazards.
- l) A hair and/or beard net that completely covers the hair shall be worn when handling food, or as required by specific policy.
- m) A material safety data sheet must be referenced for appropriate personal protective equipment, such as aprons, or rubber gloves, when working with chemical or related hazards.

15.9 Protective equipment is to be checked by supervision on at least a quarterly basis with corresponding documentation. More hazardous operations will require more frequent checks. The manager directly responsible for the work site will ensure that the standard for equipment checks is set, communicated and followed.

15.10 Employees will inspect their personal protective equipment on a regular basis, and prior to each use, to ensure it is in good condition and will provide the protection required.

15.11 All protective equipment will meet C.S.A. or other applicable standards, as required.

15.12 Talk To Your Immediate Supervisor If:

- a) the equipment is not in good condition and needs to be replaced;

- b) the equipment is inadequate or unsuitable;
- c) you have a suggestion to improve the equipment;
- d) the equipment does not fit properly;
- e) if you think a different type of equipment would give you better protection.