



if the device fits the wearer comfortably. Adjustments should be made on an individual basis for a comfortable fit while maintaining the PPE in proper position.

EH&S conducts hazard assessments for noise and respiratory contaminants. If an employee needs respiratory protection, contact EH&S for the required medical evaluation and enrollment in the respiratory protection program.



### Employee Training

Employees who are required to wear PPE must be trained on how to do the following:

- Use PPE properly,
- Be aware of when PPE is necessary,
- Know what kind of PPE is necessary,
- Understand the limitations of PPE in protecting employees from injury,
- Don, adjust, wear, and doff PPE, and
- Maintain PPE properly.



Employee training should be documented using the Safety and Health Training Record form at [www.ehs.wsu.edu/SSM/training\\_record.asp](http://www.ehs.wsu.edu/SSM/training_record.asp).

### Reassessment of Hazards

It is the supervisor's responsibility to periodically review the workplace to identify and evaluate new equipment and processes and reevaluate the suitability of previously selected PPE.

### Getting Assistance

Additional fact sheets are available specific to hand, head, foot, and eye and face protection. Call EH&S for copies, or view/print them directly from the EH&S website: [www.ehs.wsu.edu/factsheets/factsheets.htm](http://www.ehs.wsu.edu/factsheets/factsheets.htm).

If you have additional questions about workplace hazard assessments or need assistance with the selection of PPE, contact EH&S.



### Environmental Health & Safety

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<http://www.ehs.wsu.edu>

## Workplace Hazard Assessment



## Personal Protective Equipment

### **Personal Protective Equipment?**

Personal protective equipment, or PPE, is designed to protect employees from serious workplace injuries or illnesses resulting from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other workplace hazards.

### **Hazard Assessments**

Regulations require that employers conduct a hazard assessment of their workplaces to determine what hazards are present that require the use of PPE, provide workers with appropriate PPE, and require them to use and maintain it in sanitary and reliable condition.



Departments are to conduct and document the PPE assessments. To assist supervisors in this process, PPE guidelines, charts, and forms are available on the EH&S web site at [www.ehs.wsu.edu/SSM/SSMhazardass.asp](http://www.ehs.wsu.edu/SSM/SSMhazardass.asp).

### **Controlling Hazards**

Using PPE is often essential, but is not the preferred method for protecting employees from hazards. Rather, PPE should be used when hazards cannot be eliminated or managed by engineering

and/or administrative controls.

Engineering controls physically change equipment or the work environment to prevent exposure to hazards. Examples of engineering controls are machine guards and ventilation.



Administrative controls change how or when employees do their jobs to reduce exposures to workplace hazards. Administrative controls include job rotation, training, and work practices.

### **Assessment Guidelines**

To assess the need for PPE, consider each task performed and determine if personnel may encounter hazards, such as:

- Impact (falling/flying objects)
- Penetration (sharp objects which might pierce the feet or cut the hands)
- Compression (roll-over or pinching objects)
- Chemical exposure (inhalation, ingestion, skin contact, eye contact, or injection)



- Exposure to biological materials
- Temperature extremes
- Harmful dusts or fumes

- Light (optical) radiation (welding, brazing, cutting, furnaces, lasers, etc.)
- Water
- Vibration
- Excessive noise
- Electricity
- Elevated work surfaces



### **Selection Guidelines**

If the hazards cannot be reduced or eliminated through engineering or administrative controls and PPE is necessary:

1. Become familiar with the potential hazards and what PPE is available and what it can do (splash protection, impact protection, etc.) to prevent injuries and illnesses.
2. Compare the hazards with the capabilities of the available PPE.
3. Select the PPE which ensures a level of protection greater than the required minimum.
4. Fit the user with the device and provide instructions on use, care, and limitations.



### **Fitting the User**

Careful consideration must be given to fit and comfort. PPE that fits poorly will not afford the necessary protection. Also, PPE is more likely to be worn