Monthly Safety Training

**Personal Protective Equipment**

*By Sue Schauls*

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) can help complement other measures taken by employers and employees to minimize hazards and unsafe conditions. Recent OSHA revisions require the employer to complete a written hazard evaluation of the workplace to determine employee hazards and the PPE necessary to protect them.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is specialized clothing or equipment worn by employees for protection against health and safety hazards. Personal protective equipment is designed to protect many parts of the body, including; eyes, head, face, hands, feet, and ears.

**WHAT TO DO:**

1. Determine appropriate PPE for the facility.

2. Train each employee required to use PPE. Using the [www.SP2.org](http://www.SP2.org) module for ALL employees (not just the paint technicians) is one good way of administering the training.

3. Make PPE available to employees or require that employees provide their own PPE.

**Complete Written Hazard Evaluation**

Automotive shops conduct activities that require employees to don personal protection equipment (PPE). Check all that apply and retain a copy in the MSDS Binder.

**Repair & Dismantle operation:**

* Hoist or lift is used.
	+ Requires safety goggles and foot protection.
* Fluid evacuation of fuel, oils, antifreeze and wiper fluid is conducted.
	+ Requires safety goggles.
* Solvent parts washer is used.
	+ Requires safety goggles and chemical resistant gloves.

**Parts handling including removal, shipping and transporting:**

* Bolt cutters, saws and other tools are used.
	+ Requires safety goggles and foot protection.
* Cutting torch is used.
	+ Requires foot protection, safety goggles/shield and heat/flame resistant gloves.

*(Operational training is also recommended for employees using a cutting torch.)*

**Collision Repair Paint shop:**

* Paint booth is used.
	+ Requires respiratory protection.
* Paint mixing and spray gun cleaning is conducted.
	+ Requires safety goggles and chemical resistant gloves.

**Crusher activity:**

* Vehicles are crushed and/or loaded for transport.
	+ Requires foot protection.

**Keep a Copy of this Writtten PPE Evaluation in the Safety/MSDS Binder at the facility.**

**Why PPE is Important in the Workplace**

Employees at automotive shops are required to have and wear personal protective equipment such as safety goggles, foot protection, hard hats, gloves and other gear that will reasonably protect them from on the job hazards. Protecting employee’s feet, hands, and eyes are an important yet routine part of auto salvage work.

Employers routinely make items such as safety goggles and gloves available to employees. Fitted gear such as footwear, clothing and rain gear must be maintained by the employee as a condition of employment.

**Foot Protection**

Scientists and engineers for centuries have marveled at the design and structure of the human foot. The human foot is rigid enough to support the weight of your entire body, and yet flexible enough to allow you to run, dance, play sports, and to take you anywhere you want to go. Without your feet and toes, your ability to work at your job would be greatly reduced.

Potential Hazards

Impact Injuries

If you have ever stubbed your toe, you know that impact injuries can hurt. At work, heavy objects can fall on your feet. If you work around sharp objects, you can step on something sharp and puncture your foot. Heavy work boots such as steel toed boots are required on the job at an auto salvage operation.

Compression Injuries

Heavy machinery, equipment, and other objects can roll over your feet. The result of these types of accidents is often broken or crushed bones. Heavy work boots such as steel toed boots are required on the job at an auto salvage operation.

Extremes in Cold, Heat, and Moisture

If not protected, your feet can suffer from frostbite if you must work in an extremely cold environment. Extreme heat, on the other hand, can blister and burn your feet. Finally, extreme moisture in your shoes or boots can lead to fungal infections. Appropriate footwear such as rain boots or heavy work boots such as steel toed boots are required on the job at an auto salvage operation.

**Wearing and Using Safety Footwear**

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|  | * Select and use the right kind of footwear for the job you are going to be performing. Footwear should meet or exceed the standards set by ANSI (ANSI Z41-1991).
* Select footwear that fit.
* Inspect your footwear before you use them. Look for holes and cracks that might leak.
* Replace footwear that is worn or torn.
* Avoid borrowing footwear. Footwear is *personal* protective equipment.
* Store footwear in a clean, cool, dry, ventilated area.
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Remember! Your feet are one of your greatest assets. Protect them!

**Eye Protection**

Thousands of people are blinded each year from work related eye injuries. Injuries that could have been prevented, if only people would have used eye or face protection.

Potential Hazards

The major types of accidents that cause blindness include:

- Objects striking the eye;
- Contact with chemicals and other hazardous materials;
- Being struck by swinging objects such as chains and ropes; and
- Viewing radiant energy sources such as welding operations or lasers.

Dusts, Powders, Fumes, and Mists

Small particles of matter can enter your eyes and damage them. Operations such as grinding, chiseling, sanding, hammering, and spraying can create small airborne particles; particles that can injure your eyes.

Flying Objects or Particles

Operations such as grinding, chiseling, sanding, and hammering often create flying objects or particles that can damage your eyes.

Large Objects

Large objects such as:

1. swinging chains, cables and ropes;
2. tools that are thrown or fall;
3. any sharp objects such as knives, scissors, pencils, etc.; and
4. walking or falling into obstructions can damage your eyes or face.

Safety Glasses & Goggles

Safety glasses are perhaps the most widely used type of eye protection. While they may look similar to regular glasses, they are much stronger and more resistant to impact and heat than regular glasses. In addition, most safety glasses are equipped with side shields that give you protection from hazards that may not be directly in front of you. Both prescription and nonprescription safety glasses are available. Safety glasses should be Z-87 approved to meet OSHA regulations. Goggles give you more protection than safety glasses because they fit closer to your face. Because goggles surround the eye area, they give you more protection in situations where you might encounter splashing liquids, fumes, vapors, powders, dusts, and mists. Different types of goggles are available. They must indicate that they are chemical splash goggles to be worn for that purpose.

Present this Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) training to employees as this month’s Safety Training topic. Following the presentation, have each employee sign a training log. A sample log can be downloaded at <http://www.ccar-greenlink.org/EmployeeSafetyTrainingLog.pdf>. Keep the monthly Safety Training Record on file (such as in the RED MSDS binder) in the event of an OSHA inspection.



Sue Schauls is an independent environmental consultant with automotive expertise. She is the Environmental & Safety Consultant for CCAR-GreenLink the EPA automotive compliance assistance center. She is the Executive Director & regulatory consultant for the Iowa Automotive Recyclers (IAR), she developed and implements the **I**owa – **C**ertified **A**uto **R**ecyclers **E**nvironmental (I-CARE) Program. She contributes articles to several trade publications and is a member of ARA Technical Advisory and Certified Auto Recyclers Committees. Sue has a bachelors of Arts degree in *Science: Environmental Planning* from the University of Northern Iowa, 1996.