

## Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) can reduce the number and severity injuries and illnesses. All employees and students are responsible for using PPE whenever a task requires it. Supervisors and Departmental Safety Coordinators are responsible for making sure that PPE is available and in good working condition. Whenever necessary, departments are required to provide PPE to its employees/ students. If you don't know which PPE is needed for your task, please ask for guidance. Departmental supervisors must ensure that all employees and students know how to use PPE properly. Whenever an employee or student provides their own PPE, supervisors and faculty are responsible for ensuring it gets inspected properly. Employees who need PPE but don't know where to get it can contact the safety office for assistance or order directly through the Central Receiving Depot in Facility Management. NIRC employee may contact the Occupational and Safety Nurse for guidance.

Most PPE is reusable with proper maintenance. Disposable PPE (ear plugs, rubber gloves etc.) or PPE that is cracked or in disrepair may be disposed of in garbage cans or dumpsters. All discarded equipment should be destroyed prior to disposal. PPE that is contaminated should be bagged and added to the HAZMAT manifest for contracted disposal.

**Head Protection:** Hardhats are mandatory for many jobs. Hard Hats must be worn in ALL CONSTRUCTION AREAS. Wear a hardhat approved for the type of work being done. Be sure the hardhat fits well. Keep the chin strap fastened if working in an area with danger of falling debris. Wear the hardhat until exiting the work area. Use a sun safety hat (one with a wide brim and neck protection) to assist in the prevention of skin cancer.

**Hearing Protection:** Protect your ears with earplugs or earmuffs on a job with high noise. Even a usually quiet job site may have times when construction or cleaning crews make excessive noise. Discard disposable ear plugs after each use. Wash hands before inserting earplugs and wipe off muffs with a mild cleaning solution to prevent ear contamination.

**Face & Eye Protection:** Goggles and safety glasses keep materials from splashing or being thrown into the eyes. Goggles or safety glasses protect the eyes from flying objects or hazardous fluids, as well as from computer glare and sunlight. Wear properly-fitting glasses or goggles made from high-quality safety materials. Fasten side guards onto glasses for further protection. Have prescription safety glasses made if you wear prescription glasses. Full face masks are needed in jobs where chemicals or welding sparks can burn the face and eyes. Unless the mask is attached to respirators, wear the mask WITH safety glasses or goggles.

**Respiratory Protection:** Protect your lungs with the correct respiratory equipment (dust masks, cartridge respirators, gas masks, air pacts) when working in dusty or moldy conditions, spray painting, applying chemicals, working in bins, tanks, silos, and manure storage places.

**Arm & Foot Protection:** Nonslip shoes are sufficient for many jobs. Steel-toe boots are needed for most factory, construction, and lawn-care jobs, or for working on slick or debris-ridden surfaces. Tie the shoes or boots tightly to prevent harmful materials from damaging feet or ankles. Protect your feet with safety shoes or boots with non-slip soles and heels. Arms can be protected with long gloves, long potholder mitts, or long sleeves, depending on the job being performed. Be sure that materials or liquids cannot fall from a higher workspace into the top of the long gloves or mitts.

**Fall Protection:** Prevent fall injuries or death by wearing the correct harness or safety belt. Choose a harness or safety belt for its effectiveness in preventing falls. Wear well-fitting equipment. Refuse to use damaged fall-protection gear. Training with the Safety Office is required prior to climbing with Fall Protection.