



Personal Protective Equipment

Purpose

To protect University employees who work in areas where chemical or biological hazards or the potential for chemical or biological hazards exist.

Background Information

The Occupational & Safety Health Administration (OSHA) and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards require protection for the head, eyes, ears, skin, feet, hands, respiratory system, and/or body under certain hazardous working conditions.

Policy

A general rule to follow is "use of personal protective equipment is required when there is a reasonable probability that injury or illness can be prevented by such equipment."

Reasonable engineering controls, such as increased ventilation, are preferable to personal protective equipment. When employees are required to wear personal protective equipment, the cost of the equipment should be considered a departmental expense.

Supervisor Responsibility

Supervisors or instructors should consult with the CHO and Safety Officers) (7-0160) to assess hazards in areas where their employees work. A determination will be made as to which areas require the use of personal protective equipment and the type and quality of the necessary equipment. Supervisors and instructors are responsible for ensuring that workers, students, and visitors wear the protective equipment as specified.

Personal Protective Equipment Locations The cost of this equipment may be charged against any approved departmental account. Supervisors who do not have ready access to these campus facilities may obtain personal protective equipment through any approved commercial safety equipment supplier. However, supervisors should consult the CHO officer to ensure that the type of equipment selected is appropriate.

Supervisors are responsible for training their employees so they are able to identify situations that require the use of personal protective equipment and know how to properly use, care for and maintain the equipment.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees are required to wear personal protective equipment when determined necessary.

Apparel

Protective apparel protects the body from chemical exposure, temperature extremes, and injury from sharp objects. Lab coats, chemical resistant aprons, and disposable protective apparel. Proper apparel selection should be based on intended use. Apparel should not be worn outside of the laboratories except for crossing the hallway from one lab to the next.

Shoes

Appropriate footwear that is effective in preventing or limiting injury shall be worn by employees who are exposed to conditions that cause foot injuries. As a general rule, low-heeled, closed-toe shoes shall be worn in all laboratory operations where there is a likelihood of exposure to spilled chemicals.

Safety Glasses & Goggles

Appropriate eye protection shall be provided to and worn by employees whose jobs expose them to eye hazards. The minimum acceptable form of eye protection is safety glasses that meet the requirements specified in ANSI Z87.1, "Practice for Occupational and Educational Eye and Face Protection."

(https://www.rkb.us/contentdetail.cfm?content_id=107510) Impact and/or chemical resistant goggles or face shields provide additional protection and should be worn over normal corrective lenses unless prescription safety glasses are worn. <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/eyeandface/ppe/goggles3.html>

Gloves

Gloves protect the hands and arms from chemicals, temperature extremes, and abrasion. Proper selection and use is vital to a glove's ability to protect an employee's hand. This is especially true when dealing with potential exposure to chemicals. An important aspect to remember is that a glove's thickness and material type affects its ability to serve as a barrier against a specific chemical. Specifications regarding the compatibility of glove materials with chemicals are available from the CHO.

Another factor to consider when properly selecting gloves is the wearer's need for dexterity. Please ensure that the size and thickness of the glove allows the user to safely perform all manipulations. Caution is also required when using gloves around moving equipment. Gloves should not be worn by anyone whose hands are exposed to moving parts in which the gloves could get caught. Gloves should **NEVER** be worn outside of the laboratories.

Ear Plugs & Muffs

There are two forms of hearing protectors: ear plugs and ear muffs. Each has specific advantages based on wearer comfort, work environment, and cost. Both are designed to reduce noise to an acceptable level based on the level and type of noise and the type of hearing protector. Therefore, proper selection is important.

According to Cal-OSHA regulations, all employees who are exposed to noise in excess of an eight-hour time-weighted average sound level of 85 dBA (decibels, A-weighted) shall wear hearing protectors. Hearing protectors worn where noise is above this permissible level must reduce the noise to a time-weighted average of 85 dBA or less.

Supervisors are responsible for determining whether an employee's work environment exposes the employee to an unacceptable level of noise. Nothing prevents an employee from wearing hearing protectors to reduce annoyance noise or high level noise of short duration. Hearing protectors should always be considered "personal" equipment and should not be used by other individuals, except for muffs that are adequately cleaned and sanitized.