

Personal Protective Equipment

Guy E. Braxton, Corporate Safety Director, Giorgi Mushroom Co., Temple, PA

Email: GBraxton@giorgimush.com

What is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

PPE is equipment used to protect employees from hazards from the jobs they are doing.

What are the categories of Personal Protective Equipment?

(a) Hand (b) Eyes (c) Feet (d) Ears (e) Respiratory (f) Head

What is the protection for each category?

- (a) Hands - Gloves to protect the hands from electrical hazards
 - Gloves to protect the hands from cuts
 - Gloves to protect the hands from environmental conditions
 - Gloves to protect the hands from chemical exposure
- (b) Eyes - Protection from foreign object entering the eyes
 - Protection from bright light created by welding
 - Protection from splashing liquids
- (c) Feet - Steel toed shoes and boots to protect against falling objects
 - Shoes to help prevent slips
 - Shoes for protection when working in certain electrical conditions
- (d) Ears - Loud noise protection can be plugs or muffs.
 - Annual testing is required in loud areas.
 - When hearing protection is required, OSHA says you must provide employees with several choices
 - You also must instruct employees on the proper use of provided hearing protection
 - Any hearing lose of 10 decibels or more is an OSHA recordable.
- (e) Respiratory - There are two different levels of respirators: Voluntary and Mandatory
 - Voluntary requires nothing specific and an employee might chose to use a simple dust mask
 - Mandatory requires a health screening and also a face fit if you have an environment that demands the employee wear respiratory protection
 - In the mandatory category an employee might be required to wear a half face, a full face, a forced air unit or fully self

contained unit

- With some types of masks there are filters that are specific for certain chemicals or situations

- (f) Head protection: There are three levels of head protection
 - (a) Hard Hats - Protection from Falling Objects
 - (b) Hard Hats - Protection from Electrical Shock
 - (c) Bump Caps - Protects from bumping heads