

Safety Meeting Hard Hats



Company: _____ Presenter: _____ Date: _____

Your hard hat is one of the most important pieces of personal protective equipment you wear. The hard hat is a symbol of the construction industry and it illustrates the intelligence, good judgment, and safety awareness of all who wear it. Who needs a hard hat? Anyone who works in an area where a head injury could occur. Hard hats help protect against head injuries from falling or flying objects, from electrical shock or burns, and from falls or collisions.

The design of the hard hat is the key to its ability to protect you. The hard outer shell prevents objects from directly hitting your head. The shell transfers the force of the impact to the suspension which distributes that force over a large portion of your head. This system reduces the likelihood of severe head injury. Hard hats can also shield your head and hair from entanglement in machinery and from exposure to some environmental hazards.

You should be sure that your hard hat is designed for the hazards that you encounter. OSHA's construction standards require that head protection conform to the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard Z89.1-1969 which divides hard hats into three classes:

- Class A for general service with limited voltage protection (i.e. building construction)
- Class B for utility service with high-voltage protection (i.e. electrical workers)
- Class C for special service with no voltage protection (i.e. construction with no electrical hazards)

Note that the most recent revision of this standard (Z89.1-1997) renamed these categories. Class "A" is now Class "G", Class "B" is now Class "E", and Class "C" is still Class "C". Some manufacturers may reference the new letters; some may reference both. In any case, your hard hat should have a certification sticker inside. Make sure your hard hat meets your needs.

Some hard hats can offer special mounting brackets for hearing protectors, front-mounted lights, welding shields, or face shields. Others offer a sun visor to protect your neck and ears during the summer months. Liners are also available to keep your head and ears warm in the winter.

It's up to you to make sure you wear your hard hat properly. Adjust the fit so it's comfortable, yet snug. Inspect it often for dents, cracks, or other signs of wear, and keep it clean. Finally, never drill holes in the hat or carry anything in it.

SAFETY REMINDER: There are lots of excuses for not wearing your hard hat - but none of them sound good at funerals.

Employee Signatures
