

Hand Protection

Purpose

Because the hands play a role in virtually every task, they are usually taken for granted and not protected as well as they should be. Yet their distinctive characteristics - strength, flexibility, sensitivity, and coordination - are vital, and hand protection and safety should be a major concern. This section provides guidance for the selection and use of hand protection.

Policy

Employees will be provided with and required to wear appropriate hand protection when exposed to such hazards as absorption of harmful substances, severe cuts or lacerations, severe abrasions, punctures, chemical burns, thermal burns and harmful temperature extremes.

This policy does not cover Decatur Fire and Rescue or Decatur Police. These departments are covered under protective equipment programs found in their respective department's Standard Operating Procedure Manuals.

Compliance

Failure to wear appropriate hand protection as required by this policy will be treated in accordance with the Safety Policy Violation procedures, Policy #107.

Responsibilities

Department Directors - Department Directors are responsible for the following:

- Completion and documentation of hazard assessment.
- Selection and availability of appropriate hand protection for hazards identified.

Supervisors - Supervisors are responsible for:

- Enforcing the requirements of this program.

Employees - Each employee is expected to:

- Use the prescribed equipment for their jobs or work areas.
- Properly wear, clean, maintain, and inspect equipment provided.

Safety Coordinator - The safety coordinator shall:

- Provide assistance in conducting workplace hazard assessments.
- Provide assistance in the selection of appropriate hand protection.
- Conduct periodic audits of the program.

Hand Protection

Guidelines

Gloves are the most common protectors for the hands when there is a risk of harmful substances, chemical or thermal burns, extreme temperatures, or severe cuts, lacerations, abrasions, or punctures. However, no glove can provide protection from all these hazards. Therefore, it is important to select the most appropriate glove for a particular application and to determine how long it can be worn effectively. Consider work activities, degree of dexterity required, duration, frequency, degree of exposure, physical stresses, and toxic properties of chemicals. Selection guides provided by the manufacturer can provide assistance in selecting the best type of hand protection for the job.

Gloves should not be worn when operating equipment such as drill presses, lathes, or other equipment with exposed rotating parts. In these instances, the gloves may be entangled in the moving parts causing injury.

Vinyl, rubber or neoprene gloves are sufficient when working with most chemicals. However, if working with petroleum based products, a synthetic glove will be needed. When working with chemicals, gloves should be taped at the top, or folded with a cuff to keep liquids from running inside the glove or onto the employee's arm.

Leather or cotton gloves shall be worn when there is a potential for injury from being struck against, caught between, cut, or punctured; and materials handling. These types of gloves shall not be worn for protection from liquid or hazardous materials.

Insulated rubber gloves meeting the requirements of ASTM D120-87 shall be worn when working with high voltage equipment. These gloves may be worn under leather gloves to prevent punctures. A daily visual inspection must be performed and any damaged (hole, tear, puncture, cut, texture changes, embedded object, etc.) glove shall not be used.

Barrier Crèmes

Barrier crèmes should not be used as a replacement for other protection. However, they can help shield the skin from irritants and chemicals. They can be used with other protective equipment or used alone where a protective device such as gloves cannot be used or is not necessary.

Replacement

This equipment will be exchanged when inspection indicates a need.

Care & Maintenance

Equipment is to be inspected, cleaned, and maintained at regular intervals or as directed by manufacturer instructions. Any replacement or repairs that are required due to misuse or mishandling will be borne by the employee. Replacement or repairs that are due to the nature of the work will be borne by the City.

Reference:

- ◆ PPE Assessments
- ◆ Policy 107: Safety Policy Violations
- ◆ Policy 600: Personal Protective Equipment