

## Put On Your PPE

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Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) has become a much more important part of our lives in the past few years. Gloves, helmets, safety glasses, and protective clothing among other things are used regularly in the workplace, at home, and during play.



OSHA requires employers to try and eliminate hazards that exist in the workplace. Modifying equipment, work practices, and training workers to deal with the hazards are a couple of the ways this can be done. If it is not feasible to eliminate the hazard then PPE must be used to protect workers.

Each employer is required to do an assessment of the workplace and determine where and what PPE needs to be used. They are then to make a plan for the use of PPE. Employers need to choose and provide the equipment and train you. The training should include when and how to use it, when and how to inspect it, when and how to maintain the equipment, and when and how to retire it.

You can expect to be required to use one or more of the following PPE's:

**Head Protection:** Hard hats can be required for protection from falling objects or running into low hanging objects. Helmets might be required while operating bikes or other vehicles. Hats might be necessary to protect someone from heat illness.

**Eye Protection:** Working in the entertainment industry there are many jobs and types of hazards that require eye protection. Using tools, using chemicals, or the location of a job are all contributors to the need for safety glasses, goggles, or face shields.

**Hearing Protection:** Workplaces have many sources of job related noise hazards. From the volume of speakers, to machinery, to aircraft, to explosions all can endanger your hearing. Ear plug and/or earmuffs can protect you from damaging your hearing.

**Foot Protection:** Proper shoes for the work being done are necessary. This means not just the work you are doing but the work being done around you. Proper footwear may not only protect from crushing, puncture,

and temperature, but may provide traction on slippery surfaces.

**Hand Protection:** Appropriate gloves may be required to protect from injury to the hands, chemical injury and absorption of toxins. They can also provide a better grip to prevent losing control of a piece of equipment.

**Whole Body Protection:** This equipment might be used to protect from exposure to chemicals, heat, or body fluids.

**Respiratory Protection:** There are a few different types of devices to protect from breathing in irritating or harmful substances. It is important to learn how to use, clean, and replace the equipment. Proper use of a respirator may require a medical check up.

**Reflective Vests:** More and more, workers exposed to hazards of being struck by vehicles or equipment are being required to wear vests. The vest improves the ability to see you.

Many members resist using this equipment. Many members who have been using hammers for years will say, "I don't need those damn glasses. I've never been hit by a nail." Well good for you and I hope your luck stays with you. But, a friend was about to drive a nail. He set it, hit it, it flew, and hit him right between the eyes. Now luck was with him too. It only put a small puncture on the bridge of his nose, just a little blood. One inch right or left and the story's different.

It would be nice if all hazards could be eliminated from our workplaces and the rest of our world, but that is probably not possible. To protect yourself it is sometimes necessary to use PPE's. Like other equipment PPE's are tools. You need to learn about these tools and how to use them. Use the equipment. Try to become comfortable with it. Encourage your IATSE Sisters and Brother to use it. It can't work if you don't have it on.

