

The "C-Change" Initiative:

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



Toolbox Talk

Week of April 18th 2011

Head and Eye Protection Awareness

How many of us have taken the time to read the instructions and warnings on the bag our new hard hats come in? Probably not too many of us have read it. There is guidance on installing and adjusting the suspension, inspection of the shell and suspension, care and useful service life guidelines.

The JJW issued hard hats are manufactured by MSA (Mine Safety Appliances). MSA was established in 1914, and is the world's leading manufacturer of safety products designed to protect people throughout the world with their headquarters in Cranberry twp, Penna. Many MSA products, while simple to use and maintain, are sophisticated in design in that they typically integrate any combination of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to protect users against hazardous or life-threatening situations.

JJW has selected the MSA V-Gard, Class "E". Type 1, LT hard hat to protect our people. The V-Gard hard hat has a raised "V" on the top of the helmet that adds strength and gives it added impact protection. The Class "E" represents the Electrical rating which is the highest rating assigned to an MSA hard hat. Type 1 hard hat refers to the impact protection for a center blow. Type Two refers to protection from both center and off center blows. LT refers to its ability to protect in temperatures as low as -22F. All ratings and certifications are performed by The Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) which is a private, non-profit organization that administers a non-governmental, third-party certification program and tests and certifies a broad range of safety and protective products used occupationally and recreationally.

Now that we understand the model, class and type of hard hat we use, let's look at a few important concerns:

What is the service life of an MSA hard hat and suspension?

The shell of a hard hat cannot exceed 5 years. Degradation of the HDPE or high-density polyethylene can begin as soon as two years depending on the work environment. Refinery workers may subject their hard hat and other PPE to gases and chemicals which reduce the lifespan. Suspension must be replaced annually. This is an important part of the hardhat which absorbs the majority of the blow should something strike the shell. The shell and suspension do bear manufacture dates.

How do I inspect my hard hat?

Check the overall appearance. Has the shell lost its glossy look? If so, Ultraviolet damage has occurred and it's time to replace it. Is the suspension webbing frayed, torn or have any of the plastic components broken? Is it over 12 months old? Then it needs to be replaced.

How do I care for my hard hat?

Your hard hat can be washed using a mild soap, no detergents. Don't throw, drop or use the helmet as a support. Do not abuse your helmet; it could save your life.

Can I apply stickers to my hard hat?

In most cases, yes. There is an extremely low risk for a chemical reaction between the hard hat shell and the pressure-sensitive sticker/decal adhesive. Under normal conditions, stickers and decals won't negatively affect the performance of the hard hat.

Can hard hats be worn backwards?

JJW's Corporate Safety policy, along with many of our clients site Specific Safety plans, DO NOT permit the hard hat to be worn backwards. MSA welding hard hats and MSA welding shields are designed to be worn with the brim facing forward.

If you have any questions regarding the care, use or Safety rules for hard hats, ask one of the JJW Safety Coordinators for guidance.