

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 25th 2011

Head and Eye Protection Awareness

So far this month, we've discussed the ANSI Z87.1 safety eye wear standard and the ANSI Z89.1 head protection standard. We've also talked about the PPE JJW provides to its work force and how the MSA brand hardhats and face shields, when properly installed and worn, can provide us with exceptional protection. We would like to conclude this month's topic discussing these items in a bit more detail.

We started this month by talking about eye protection and how over 2000 U.S. workers receive some form of medical treatment everyday due to eye injuries sustained at work with the yearly total exceeding 800,000. Construction workers have one of the highest eye injury rates and most are from contact with an object.

Safety glasses with side shields are an absolute must at all times in the field. The most common cause of debris in the eye is - swirling winds can catch a worker off guard and they then find themselves getting an eye flush or worse yet, ending up in the emergency room or Doctor's office. MSA face shields when used with the wrap around chin guard require safety glasses to be worn under the shield for most mechanical tasks. When working with chemicals, goggles must be worn under the shield for splash protection.

The second most common cause of debris in the eye is when removing our hardhats. It is crucial to "Lean Forward" to remove our hard hat and face shield and clean off the debris that gathers on the ledge and brim. This is because grinding or other tasks creating metal dust and dirt. Many people had metal or debris removed from their eyes after flipping up a face shield after grinding. This "Lean Forward" technique will significantly reduce the probability of this material falling onto your face and eyes.

Carry a clean handkerchief or paper towel to wipe the dirt from your eye area, don't use a dirty sleeve. If you feel there is something in your eye, the natural tendency is to rub your eye – Don't – it can make the situation worse. Come to the safety office and let us assist you.

Burning tasks require the use of burning goggles or a tinted face shield. Never rely on safety glasses for UV protection when working around welding operations. Generally speaking, if you're within 6 feet of work requiring special PPE, you must be in the same PPE as the person performing that work. Some clients require the same PPE at 4 feet. Check with your Foreman for guidance.

Hard hats are something many of us take for granted. We put it on, don't think much of it and typically ignore it other than when something breaks on it. Some of us toss them onto the tables or floors when we leave the field and get to a safe area. Careful inspection and care is needed to maintain their integrity. Daily inspections and occasional cleaning will keep it on the radar so you can see if there are any issues with it. Remember to replace the suspension annually and replace the shell when needed. Lifespan for a hard hat ranges from two to five years depending on the type of work and environment it is exposed to. Head injuries are rarely minor. Your hard hat is probably the most important piece of PPE you wear every day.

Over the past 8 years, there has been a large reduction in eye injuries due to the awareness from toolbox talks, the superior PPE we provide, and our JJW workforce's use of PPE. Hazard recognition is the key to staying safe on all jobsites. If you feel and PPE upgrade is needed, Stop the task, and then contact your foreman. It is in everyone's best interest use the best PPE. Recognize hazards and PPE needed when discussed at JSA reviews. When conditions change, Stop, and ensure the proper procedures and PPE are in place. This will help keep us all injury free.