

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Safety

Personal protective equipment, commonly referred to as "PPE", is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. These injuries and illnesses may result from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other workplace hazards. Personal protective equipment may include items such as gloves, safety glasses and shoes, earplugs or muffs, hard hats, respirators, or coveralls, vests and full body suits.

**PPE is the last line of defense to protect someone from a hazard!**

PPE equipment is worn to *reduce the exposure to hazards and is the last line of defense* because the hazard itself has not been removed or reduced. Personal Protective Equipment must:

- 1 Fit properly and be maintained;
- 2 Be used correctly at all times in order to be effective; hands-on-training is necessary to ensure PPE is worn properly; and,
- 3 In order to reduce the risk of contamination, it is critical to don (put on) and doff (remove) PPE properly as well as store or dispose of PPE appropriately.



For information on the sequence for donning (put on) and doffing (removing) PPE, see second attachment.

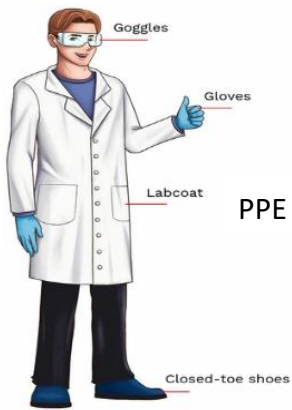
Every piece of PPE has a specific use and may be made of specialized materials appropriate for one use, but not appropriate for another. Every hazard will outline the minimum PPE required. It is important to remember that not all PPE is created equally. For instance, there are different types of gloves; **no** glove material will remain impervious to specific chemicals forever and **no** one glove is resistant to all chemicals. Boots or shoes also provide different levels of protection and grip.

Did  
you  
know?

Certain PPE can degrade over time; it is important to inspect PPE before using it.



PPE that may have become contaminated with hazardous materials should not be worn in public hallways, washrooms, lunch rooms, conference rooms, etc. Lab coats and other PPE should be removed after use and stored within the lab or in personal locker(s). Wearing it outside of the defined area (laboratory) brings the potential of hazardous materials to a public environment.



PPE needs to be decontaminated or replaced if it is contaminated.

PPE will only protect you if you wear it!



## Examples of PPE



### Hand Protection

- Gloves appropriate for the task (ie: chemical hazard, cut resistance)
- Gloves that insulate for hot or cold



### Hearing Protection

- Ear plugs, ear muffs



### Body Protection

- Lab coats, aprons, coveralls
- Appropriate shoes and clothing



### Respiratory Protection

- Masks
- Respirators – must be a respirator that is rated to protect you from the product you are working with. Not all respirators are the same
  - Must be FIT Tested
  - FIT testing must be repeated:
    - Every two years
    - Weight gain/loss of more than 15 pounds
    - If you have facial structural changes



### Face Protection

- Face shields
- Safety glasses or goggles must be CSA certified
  - Safety glasses provide protection against impacts
  - Safety goggles are better for chemical splashes and spills
  - If there is a potential for splashes and spills, both safety glasses and face shields should be worn
  - Prescription glasses are not safety glasses!

