

Section 8 – Personal Protective Equipment

Although considered the last resort, there will come a time in the course of work where an employee will need to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). PPE can be as simple as wearing closed toed shoes or wearing safety glasses, but it could be as involved as donning a half face respirator.

Responsibility

District Administration

- To ensure that appropriate PPE is available to employees at risk as required by WorkSafeBC.

Supervisors and Managers

- Ensure that those employees under their direction are properly trained in the required PPE for their job/task.
- That employees use appropriate PPE when required.
- And that employees are trained in the proper care and maintenance of any required PPE.

Employees

- Must abide by any and all training they are given with respect to PPE use.
- Ensure that their assigned PPE is kept in clean and useable condition.
- To use PPE when it is required.

Part 8.01 – General PPE

Protecting Your Feet

- During any work where there is a risk of crush injuries to your feet you must wear CSA approved steel toed shoes.
- When working with chemicals/cleaners you must wear closed toed shoes (running shoe style or better).
- Sandals, flip flops and ‘cros’ are not adequate footwear unless working solely in an office environment.

Protecting Your Legs

- While operating chain saws and bladed brush walkers you must wear padded falling pants.
- If using weed eaters, pants and/or coveralls are required.

Protecting Your Hands

- If you are working with material that is likely to chafe, cut or puncture your hands you need to wear gloves that provide suitable protection.
- In the course of your work if you are required to deal with bodily fluids or students believed to be currently contagious with a communicable disease you are required to wear disposable latex (or similar) gloves.
- While working with hazardous material you need to wear the appropriate gloves for the task/material. This may require consulting an SDS (Safety Data Sheet) for the material in order to determine what type of glove is required.

Protecting Your Eyes

- While using any power tools, either hand held or installed, you must wear appropriate eye protection. This could be safety glasses, goggles or a face shield.
- When welding or using cutting torches you must wear eye protection that will protect you from flash and ultraviolet light.

Protecting Your Head

- Generally, School District facilities are work environments where hard hats are not required. However during times of major renovations and/or building construction there will be areas of the work site where there is a risk to workers of falling debris and material. In these instances workers will be required to wear an approved hard hat.

Part 8.02 - Hearing Conservation Program

In Part 7 of the regulation, employers are required to measure noise exposure if a worker might be exposed to a noise level exceeding 82 dBA Lex. And if measurements indicate that the worker is being exposed to levels above 85 dBA Lex they must take steps to protect the workers hearing as well as monitor the effectiveness of that protection – meaning that annual hearing tests will be required. School District No. 27 will provide workers who are exposed to excessive noise a variety of ear plugs and ear muffs as required.

Responsibility

District Administration

- To ensure that a Hearing Conservation Program is developed and in place.

Managers and Supervisors

- To ensure that a risk assessment for noise exposure is conducted in their work areas.
- That employees under their direction receive any required training regarding noise exposure and hearing protection.
- That hearing protection is used when required.

Employees

- Must abide by any and all training they are given with respect hearing protection and noise exposure.
- That their assigned hearing protection is kept clean and serviceable.
- That they use adequate hearing protection whenever it is required.

Regulatory Requirements

Regulation requires that if noise in the workplace exceeds the noise exposure limits a program must be developed and implemented. This program involves:

- Noise measurement
 - Noise measurement is not required if those workers with potential for excessive noise exposure are provided with an effective noise control.
- Education and training

- The employer will arrange for general education and training to be given each year at the time the employees hearing is tested. This will be done by the approved hearing test provider.
- Engineered noise control
 - If possible, sources of excessive noise will be controlled at the source so as to remove the need of hearing protection. An example of this is housing a noisy shop tool, such as a planer, in a room which provides adequate noise protection for other shop occupants.
- Hearing protection
 - Will include a variety of foam ear plugs and ear muffs.
- Posting of noise hazard areas
- Hearing tests
 - They will be administered by a tester approved by the Board.
 - Any test results must be forwarded to the Board.
 - The employer must keep all test results for as long as that employee works for the employer.
- Annual program review

Part 8.03 – Respiratory Protection Program

For some work, generally confined to the maintenance department, employees may be exposed to concentrations of airborne contaminants that exceed regulated limits for exposure. If there is no other way to protect the employee from exposure then they will be provided with appropriate respiratory protection.

For any employee that is provided, and as such required, to wear a respirator they are required to be clean shaven where the respirator seals with the face. For this purpose, clean shaven will be defined as having shaved prior to reporting for work that day.

Responsibilities

Employer

- Implementing a written respirator program.
- Ensuring that the worksite is evaluated for breathing hazards.
- Eliminating or minimizing all breathing hazards.
- Providing and maintaining respirators needed for any airborne hazard present at the worksite, and ensuring that workers use the equipment when required.
- Providing supervisors with the education and training necessary to ensure that workers use respirators safely.
- Providing workers with the education, training, and supervision necessary for safe use of respirators.
- Requiring a medical assessment if there is a concern about a worker's ability to wear a respirator.

Principals, Manager and Supervisors

- Assessing the type and amount of exposure.
- Selecting the appropriate respirators.
- Implementing training and instruction programs.
- Administering the overall program, including the maintenance of records.
- Reviewing the program on an annual basis.

- Workers are aware of breathing hazards on the worksite(s).
- Respirators are available when required.
- Workers use respirators correctly as required.
- Workers are clean-shaven.
- Respirators are properly cleaned, inspected, maintained, and stored.
- Workers are aware of any equipment or clothing that may interfere with respirator use.
- Working conditions are monitored in order to alert supervisors of exposure to higher concentrations of a contaminant or a new contaminant.
- Workers are aware of potential issues that may develop during respirator use, such as discomfort, skin irritation, or breathing difficulty.
- The program administrator is notified of concerns or conditions that might affect workers respiratory protection.

Workers

- Understanding and following safe work procedures.
- Using their respirators as instructed.
- Understanding the limitations of their respirators and following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Inspecting their respirators before use.
- Immediately reporting any equipment problems to their supervisors.
- Properly cleaning and storing their respirators.

Selection of Respirators

The selection of respirators is done in accordance with *CSA Standard CAN/CSA-Z94.4-93*.

Training

Every worker who may have to wear a respirator will be trained in the proper use of the respirator. Both the worker and his/her supervisor receive this training which will be repeated at least annually with records kept in the Human Resources Office. This training includes:

- Description of the respirator
- The intended use and limitations of the respirator
- Proper wearing, adjustment, and fit testing
- Cleaning and storage methods
- Inspection and maintenance procedures

When wearing respirators, workers experiencing any of the following must leave the contaminated area:

- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Eye irritation
- Unusual odour or taste
- Excessive fatigue
- Difficulty breathing

Respirator Fitting Procedures

You must do at least one of these checks each time you put on your respirator. But prior to doing either make sure that the respirator is in good working condition.

Negative-pressure user seal check

- After properly donning the face piece, cover both inlet valves with your hands to create a seal and then inhale gently.
- Hold for 10 seconds.
- If you have a good seal, the face piece should collapse slightly against your face and stay collapsed. No air should leak into the face piece.
- If the face piece doesn't collapse and stay collapsed, there is an air leak and either the respirator needs reseating, repair or replacement.

Positive-pressure user seal check

- After properly donning the face piece, cover the exhaust valve with your hand to create a seal and then exhale gently.
- Hold for 10 seconds.
- If you have a good seal, the face piece should bulge out and stay out. If air leaks out you need to reseal, repair or replace the respirator.

Part 8.04 – Shower and Eyewash Stations

During certain activities in the School District there may be a risk for exposing your eyes to chemicals and debris. In areas where there are these risks the school district has installed shower and/or eyewash stations.

Responsibilities

District Administration

- District Administration is responsible to ensure that eyewash and shower stations are installed where required and that regular inspections take place to ensure proper operation.

Manager, Supervisors and Principals

- To ensure that employees under their direction are trained in the use of any applicable shower and/or eyewash stations.
- That all employees abide by their shower/eyewash responsibilities.

Teachers, Custodians and Maintenance

Are required to ensure that any eyewash or shower station in their classroom, lab/prep room, custodial room or shop is:

- Kept clear of obstructions.
- Remain free from tampering.
- Not used for any reason other than the designed purpose.
- Checked for proper operation on a regular basis.
- That students or others in the room are instructed in the location and use of each.
- Report any issues or damage to their supervisor immediately.

Eyewash Stations

For instructions on the proper use of shower and eyewash stations, please refer to the SWP – Shower & Eyewash Stations.

Reference Material

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations
Part 5.89
Part 8 – Respiratory Protection