



# PPE Head Protection

## Is The Sky Falling?

Body harnesses, self-retracting life lines (SRLs) and lanyards are familiar personal protective equipment (PPE) for those who are working at heights. But there is another fall hazard that may go unnoticed - the danger to the worker below an elevated jobsite. This danger is caused by falling objects. In 2019 the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 241 death were caused by workers being struck by falling objects.

Head protection is essential to protect yourself from falling objects whenever there is activity above you at a jobsite. Dropped tools, equipment or building materials can quickly build up deadly momentum when falling from a modest height.

### Type I Hard Hat

Type I head protection is intended to reduce the impact force of a blow to the top of the head. Light weight and the least bulky to wear.

### Type II Hard Hat

Type II head protection also reduces the force of a lateral impact from a blow delivered off-center or from the side or rear in addition to blows directly to the top of the head. Type II helmets contain



*Type I hard hat with chin strap.*

more padding and are slightly more bulky. If there is a possibility of being hit from the side by a swinging objects you should consider using a Type II.



*Type II hardhats have additional padding and are slightly heavier, but they add additional protection.*

### Chin Strap

Using a chin strap can save lives by keeping the helmet secure when you are moving around the jobsite. A chin strap helps keep a worker's head protection secure in case of a fall.

Having head protection securely fastened with a chin strap protects a fallen worker's head from striking any nearby objects or surfaces if they somehow end up swinging or tipping unexpectedly during fall arrest.

Hard-hats use an internal suspension structure that absorbs the shock from objects coming into contact with your head. A hard hat has a built-in suspension system that acts as a shock absorber to cushion a blow. Even in instances where the hat is damaged by an object, the shock-absorption still reduces the collision. However, as great as hard hats are, they need consistent upkeep in order to provide quality hazard-prevention.

### Check for Wear and Tear

The external covering of the hat is held up by a cable, which is secured to a headband. The band ensures that the external part of the hat stays away from your skull in case you're hit by something. Since both the cradle and the headband are essential to injury prevention, you should check to make sure they are not worn out or detached. Even a small crack would indicate the need to replace the shell.



## Caring for Your Hard Hat

If the shell is fissured or damaged do not try and fix it. Just get a replacement. Don't try to "modify" your hard hat because the airflow is not to your liking. This severely reduces the external part of the hat's capability for protection.

Clean the hard-hat once a month. Soak it in hot soap-water and then rinse it off. For the pieces besides the shell you can steam clean. If you do not wash these parts they will rot from dirt and sweat. Also, do not use harsh chemicals or solvents on the materials of the shell.

## Storage

The hardhat can be weakened by extreme heat. Do not store your hardhat in the window of your vehicle.

## Wear It Right

The suspension qualities of the hat are the primary thing protecting you, so it is important that you do not toggle with the natural settings and not wear a hood beneath the hat. Invest in or request from your supervisor a cold-weather liner if you are too cold.

was fatally struck in the head by a tape measure that was accidentally dropped and fell 50 stories.

So what is the answer? A tool lanyard, connecting hand tools to your belt so you don't inadvertently drop objects onto unsuspecting people below.

Tool lanyards act much as fall protection lanyards do, securing your tools or equipment and preventing them from falling if dropped.

To use a tool lanyard, simply attach one end of the lanyard to any loose tool you will be using. The other end of the lanyard can be attached to your tool belt or around your wrist. Not only will this

prevent dropped tools from becoming dangerous falling objects, but it also prevents you from losing tools you drop by tethering them to you. It's convenient for you and safer for anyone below you. Using tool lanyards every time you work with loose tools and equipment at heights is a great habit to form.

Tool lanyards and safety helmets may seem unassuming, but these simple pieces of PPE prevent injuries and save lives. But PPE is only effective when it's worn, which suggests it's a good idea to get into the habit of using tool lanyards and safety helmets every time you work at a jobsite where falling objects are possible.



*Lanyards can be attached to all types of tools including power tools.*



*A tool lanyard can keep you from dropping your tool on someone below.*

## Tool Lanyards

Head protection helps protect workers underneath a jobsite above, of course, but preventing these objects from falling in the first place can further help to prevent injuries.

On jobsites that involve working at heights, even the most innocuous items can become deadly projectiles. For example, in 2014 the New York Post reported the death of a worker at a construction site in Jersey City, N.J., who

# SAFETY TRAINING SIGN-IN SHEET

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: PPE Head Protection

The following employees participated in this training.

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