

Inspecting Your PPE

About 8 minutes to deliver

Every piece of it has a way of failing quietly, and the inspection takes about ninety seconds for the lot.

1910.132(e): defective or damaged personal protective equipment shall not be used. That is the whole rule, and it puts the decision with the person putting it on — which means the inspection has to actually happen.

Ninety seconds, before you put it on, every day.

HARD HAT

Shell for cracks, dents, gouges, and chalky or faded plastic — sun makes it brittle. Suspension for cracked webbing, worn attachment points, a stretched headband. Any real impact retires it, and so does a shell that crazes when you flex it. Nothing worn underneath it.

EYE PROTECTION

Scratched or pitted lenses go in the bin — you stop seeing properly and you start lifting them to look, which is when something arrives. Check the frame and the side shields, and check it is rated (Z87 marked) rather than a pair of sunglasses.

GLOVES

Right glove for the job before anything else — cut, chemical, heat, electrical are four different gloves and one does not do another's work. Look for holes, worn palms and fingertips, splits at the seams, and stiffness or swelling from chemicals. Never near rotating machinery.

BOOTS

Tread worn smooth is the single biggest cause of slips. Also: separating soles, split uppers, an exposed toe cap, and holes that let water and chemicals in. Laced properly, because a rolled ankle usually starts with a loose boot.

HEARING PROTECTION

Plugs: clean, not hardened, not cracked, and the right size for you. Muffs: cushions soft and sealing, not cracked, and headband tension still there — old muffs go slack and do nothing. Anything through the seal breaks it — hair, glasses arms, a hood.

RESPIRATOR

Facepiece for cracks and distortion, valves for tears and grit, straps for stretch, and cartridges in date and the right kind. Seal check every time it goes on. Fit test still current. Nothing between it and your face.

HIGH-VISIBILITY

A vest grey with dust reflects nothing. Wash it or replace it. Torn, faded or with the reflective tape peeling means it has stopped doing its job — this is the item people wear longest past its life.

FALL PROTECTION — THE STRICTEST

1926.502(d)(21) requires personal fall arrest systems to be inspected prior to each use.

Webbing: cuts, fraying, pulled stitching, chemical burns, hard shiny patches from heat, discoloration. Hardware: cracks, distortion, corrosion, sharp edges, a gate that does not close and lock. Shock pack: any sign it has deployed. Labels: still there and still readable — no legible label means out of service.

Anything that has taken a fall is finished. Tag it and destroy it so it cannot come back into use.

THE HABIT THAT MATTERS

A defective item is destroyed or tagged, not put back in the box. Something set aside as "the bad one" will be picked up in a hurry by somebody who was not there when you said it. And tell somebody — a pattern of the same failure means the wrong gear was bought.

ASK THE CREW

- When did anyone last actually inspect their harness rather than glance at it?
- Is anyone in worn boots or a grey high-vis?
- Where does damaged PPE go on this site — the bin, or back in the box?

29 CFR 1910.132 · 29 CFR 1926.95 · 29 CFR 1926.502

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Inspecting Your PPE

About 8 minutes to deliver · 29 CFR 1910.132 · 29 CFR 1926.95 · 29 CFR 1926.502

Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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