



Head Injury

## eSafetyLine

### **Maintenance of a Hard Hat**

Many hard hats are treated like an unwanted pet; left out in the weather, neglected until they can do something for the owner. Hard hats are the “brain’s bodyguard” yet they are regularly dropped, kicked, sat on or left to bake in the sun. The hard hat’s image needs to be adjusted to the important task it completes each day; keeping a construction worker’s brain and head in one piece. Like any other piece of PPE (personal protective equipment) it should be regularly cleaned and tuned up to be as effective as possible.

Hard hats cannot be repaired with glue or duct tape when they’re damaged, they should be replaced. Hard hats should be replaced when:

- Cracks, deformities or holes appear in the shell
- The shell shows signs of exposure to heat, chemicals or ultraviolet light (the sun)
- The shiny surface appears dull or chalky
- The shell becomes brittle

Routine maintenance that should be done to a hard hat includes washing. Any hard hat with or without logos can be very simply washed with soap and water or just by using a damp paper towel. The suspension in the hat can also be cleaned with soap and water. Most modern suspensions have some type of a sweatband incorporated. These can also be gently washed by hand. Typically a hard hat long outlasts its suspension, but replacement suspensions can be found for most hard hats at a reasonable price. What would cause a suspension to need replacing? Most simply put the suspension wears out. The suspension

should be replaced when:

- it becomes brittle
- one or more of the mounts break off
- the suspension will no longer hold securely to the head
- the cradling straps break or become worn

A hard hat is a construction worker's best defense against a head injury and should be used and cared for like any other piece of lifesaving equipment. Hard hats should be inspected before and after each use. Although there is no definite service life for hard hats, most manufactures recommend replacement after no more than 5 years to maintain the integrity of the hard hat.

### **Discussion Questions**

When should a hard hat be replaced?

Why does a suspension need replacing before a hard hat?

# MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

TOPICS ADDRESSED: \_\_\_\_\_

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## EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

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EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

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ACTION TAKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Safety Coordinator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date