Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program
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POLICY:

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

1.0 Scope

OSHA has determined that workers involved in a wide range of occupations are exposed to a significant risk of injury or death from various hazards in the workplace. Therefore, employers are expected to protect employees by first attempting to remove the hazard(s) through engineering or design. Secondly, if the hazard can’t be removed by engineering, attempt to administratively remove exposure to the hazard(s) by written procedures or practices. Lastly, if the first two options are not feasible, the employer shall protect its employees from the hazards in the workplace with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

The purpose of this program is to provide the various departments and its employees with the tools to identify the hazards in the workplace and the most suitable PPE to protect the employee from these hazards. The OSHA standards that require this practice are CFR1910.132 & CFR1926.28.

2.0 Program Format

1. The program at USM is centered around the following critical areas:
   a) Management Support
   b) Workplace Hazard Assessment
   c) Selection of PPE
   d) Training

2. Management support - The concept of protecting employees from workplace hazards is fully endorsed by the administration here at USM; namely, our president, vice president of administration, facilities, and directors/deans.

3. Workplace hazard assessment - each department shall identify the hazards associated with the work practices performed by the employees. The Workplace Hazard Assessment can be performed jointly between workers and supervisors.

4. The hazard assessment form to be used is found in the Forms section of the UEH&S website. It is titled Workplace Hazard Assessment. As noted, this form certifies that the worksite/job tasks have been evaluated. The supervisor in charge of the worksite/job task is to sign the form at the completion of the assessment.

5. Now that the hazard assessment for each worksite/job task has been completed, the same form is used to identify the correct PPE to be worn for each task.
6. Selection of PPE – Using the “PPE required” section of the Workplace Hazard Assessment, identify the PPE needed for the specific hazards that an employee could be exposed to in the workplace.

7. PPE Purchasing – Supervisors are to order needed equipment using the PPE ordering form provided by the University Environmental Health & Safety Office.

**PPE Types**

| 🟠 | Hand Protection (Gloves) |
| 🟠 | Eye Protection (Safety glasses/goggles) |
| 🟠 | Hearing Protection (Plugs/ear phones) |
| 🟠 | Respirator Protection (N95 mask) |
| 🟠 | Head Protection (Hard hat) |
| 🟠 | Foot/Leg Protection (Shoes/Chaps) |
| 🟠 | Safety Harness or Lanyard (Fall Protection) |
| 🟠 | Vehicle Seat Belts |

8. **Important Notice** – Employees failing to comply with personal protective equipment policies will be subject to progressive disciplinary actions as outlined in the Employee’s Union Contract.

**3.0 Hand Protection**

1. Every employee shall use protective gloves in the following situations:

   a) When coming in contact with or working around human body fluids including blood, vomit, etc.
   b) When cleaning bathrooms, water fountains, etc.
   c) When cleaning sink traps.
   d) When handling recyclables including glass or plastic containers, tin and aluminum cans, paper and carton containers, etc.
   e) During rubbish or trash pickups.
   f) When handling extreme hot or cold temperatures.
   g) When handling solvent and other identifiable toxic substances.
   h) When lifting or carrying heavy objects or any item that may have sharp edges.
2. Issuance – Appropriate protective gloves are available from the supervisor when hand protection is required. It is the employee’s responsibility to obtain the proper protective hand wear from his/her supervisor and replace it when needed.

3. Glove types currently being used:
   
   a) Leather & Synthetic  
   b) Chemical Resistant  
   c) Puncture and cut resistant  
   d) Reusable and disposable for Labs

4. Maintenance – Each employee issued gloves is responsible for their care, maintenance, and daily inspection.

5. Replace when damaged.

4.0 Eye Protection

1. Coverage – Every employee shall use protective eye wear in the following situations:
   
   a) Working on stationary machines or equipment.  
   b) Working with portable power hand tools.  
   c) Handling chemicals  
   d) Using hand tools for the purpose of cutting or scrapping  
   e) Using power actuated tools.  
   f) Blowing compressed air with a nozzle.  
   g) Operating powered lawn cutting equipment.  
   h) Operating hedge trimmers or weedwackers.  
   i) Operating chainsaws or limbing equipment.  
   j) Breaking up concrete, rock, hardtop with hand tools.  
   k) Working with steam.

2) Issuance - Protective eye protection is available in two forms: safety glasses and goggles. It is the employee’s responsibility to obtain the proper protective eye wear from his/her supervisor. **NOTE:** All eye protection issued must be ANSI Z87.1 approved.

3) Replacement – All employees are provided with safety eye protection at the time of employment. If lost or damaged, the employee is to notify his/her supervisor and obtain a replacement. Types currently being used:

   a) Safety glasses with side shields.  
   b) Chemical splash goggles.  
   c) Full face shields.  
   d) General use goggles.
5.0 **Hearing Protection**

1. **Coverage** - Every employee shall use hearing protection in the following situations and/or when marked **“Hearing Protection Required”**:
   
   a) When using any machine or piece of equipment that generates noise in excess of 85 dB or higher
   b) Using power actuated tools (hammer, drills, etc.).
   c) All riding lawn mowers
   d) Operating chainsaws, leaf blowers, and chipper machines
   e) Wet vacuums
   f) Brush clipper, string trimmers, post hole digger
   g) Stump grinders

2. **Issuance** - Ear plugs or muffs are available from the supervisor where hearing protection is required. It is the employee’s responsibility to obtain the proper protection from his/her supervisor.

3. **Maintenance** - Each employee issued hearing protection is responsible for their care, maintenance and daily inspection. At USM we have two levels of protection required:
   
   a) Level I - 85 to 95 db, plugs or muffs.
   b) Level II - 96 db and up, plugs and muffs.

6.0 **Respiratory Protection**

1. Sampling analysis has shown that existing engineering controls are sufficient in controlling airborne nuisance emissions from exceeding OSHA PELs from the tasks examined at USM. Based on measured results, the need to provide respiratory protection is not warranted at this time.

2. **Voluntary Respirator Use** - If any USM employee feels the need to use and wear respiratory protection while doing assigned tasks, they may do so voluntarily in accordance with the Respiratory Protection standard CFR1910.134, Appendix D.

3. Copies of Appendix D of the Standard are available in the University Environmental Health & Safety Office and in the **Forms** section of the UEH&S website.

4. If an employee elects to use an N95 respirator mask, it is strongly advised that they read the manufacturer’s instructions and follow the guidelines written in Appendix D.

5. N95 respirator masks are available for employee use. Contact your supervisor.
7.0 Head Protection
1. Coverage - Every employee shall use protective hard hats in the following situations:
   a) When in a designated hard hat area or site.
   b) When working under work tasks above them where there is the change of something falling from the work area above.
   c) When using chainsaws.
2. Issuance - Hard hats are available from the supervisor where head protection is required. It is the staff member's responsibility to obtain the proper head protection from his/her supervisor as needed.
3. Type currently being used: Types Class E and G.
4. Maintenance - Each employee issued a hard hat is responsible for its care, maintenance, and daily inspection.
5. Damaged head protection should be replaced as soon as possible.

8.0 Foot/Leg Protection
1. Coverage - Every employee shall use protective foot wear (boots) in the following situations:
   a) When laying steel pipe in ground trenches.
   b) When doing tasks involving very heavy materials which could be dropped and cause injury to the feet.
   c) When using a chainsaw.
   Note: Leg Protection – chaps, rated for maximum chainsaw RPMs, are mandatory for chainsaw users.
2. Issuance - Employees are to purchase steel toed boots and will receive a 30% credit from FM. See your supervisor prior to purchase.
3. Maintenance - Each employee is responsible for their care, maintenance and daily inspection.
4. Damaged foot and leg protection should be replaced as soon as possible.

9.0 Safety Body Harnesses and Lanyards
1. Coverage - Every employee shall use approved fall protection equipment which protects workers from injury due to falling in the following situations:
   a) When working at heights over 4 feet for General Industry or 6 feet for construction. USM employees fall under General Industry CFR1910 regulations.
   b) 15 feet from a roof edge doing maintenance including HVAC work, roof repairs, changing of lights, etc.
2. Issuance - Approved harnesses and lanyards are available from the shift supervisor. When issued, special note should be taken to insure proper fit for each individual employee.
Note: Belts are no longer allowed, only body harnesses. Reference USM Fall Protection Program Policy effective November 1996.

3. Types currently being used:
   b. Shock absorbing lanyards (OSHA 1910.66).

4. Maintenance – Each employee is responsible for their care, maintenance, and daily inspection.
5. Damaged equipment should not be used and replaced as soon as possible.

10.0 Vehicle Seat Belts
1. Coverage – When riding in a USM vehicle employees are required to use (at all times when the vehicle is moving) a seat belt and shoulder harness.

11.0 Training
1. Each employee issued PPE as result of the Workplace Hazard Assessment shall be trained on the following topics:
   a. When is PPE needed - recognizing the hazard(s)?
   b. What is the best PPE for the hazards present?
   c. How to effectively wear the PPE.
   d. Limitations of the PPE.
   e. How to maintain the PPE to insure that it protects as designed.
   f. When to take the PPE out of service due to damage or wear or expiration.
2. Retraining on PPE is required if one or more of the following circumstances occur:
   a. The employee demonstrates a lack of knowledge pertaining to PPE use.
   b. Changes in the workplace or work practices make the previous training obsolete.
   c. Changes in PPE design and function.