

# ••• safety •••

# head protection

## Head Injuries Can Last Forever

Some types of injuries cause pain and inconvenience, but in time they will heal. Head injuries are different. A head injury can completely change a person's life. It can alter one's physical and mental capabilities and personality.

That's why it is so important to wear a hard hat, to protect yourself from a devastating injury.

Hardhats protect you from impacts such as an object falling from above or an obstruction which you bump into such as an overhead pipe. Depending on the design and material of your hardhat, it might also protect you against dangers such as electric shock, chemical spills and dust.

A hardhat is the most widely used type of head protection. But there are many others made to protect against various hazards. One is the bump cap, which protects your head from lesser hazards such as overhead obstructions. But it is not a substitute for a hardhat. Also available are industrial helmets made of hard material. Another type of protection includes hoods, which are made of flexible materials and offer protection against chemical splashes.

No matter what kind of head protection is assigned to you, it is important to take good care of it and wear it correctly. The following are tips for use and care of the most common type of head protection — the hardhat:

- First, make sure you wear your hardhat when required. It won't do you any good if it is still sitting in your locker or next to your lunch box in the truck.
- Make sure you are using the right kind of head protection for your job.



Ask your supervisor about the kind of hardhat you need.

- Get a hardhat which fits well. If it is comfortable, you will be more likely to be wearing it when needed.
- Keep your hardhat clean by washing it regularly. Use warm soapy water. Don't use a solvent because it could weaken the hat so that it will not protect you as well.
- Check your hat regularly. Look for signs of wear and damage such as cracks or creases in the shell, or damage to the suspension.
- Do not subject your hat to damage from the sun by leaving it outdoors or in a window.
- Do not put things (such as a deck of cards) inside your hat because this defeats the shock-absorbing purpose of the suspension system.
- Never drill holes in your hat and never etch your initials in it. Also, do not repaint your hat. All of these activities can reduce the effectiveness of your hat.
- If your hat has received a considerable blow, replace it. It may have received damage you cannot see.

*Consult your safety supervisor if you have any questions about how to choose or care for a hardhat or any other form of head protection.*

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