

## Safe Work Guideline

### The Use of Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing

**Prepared By:**  
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**Effective Date:**  
February 2010

**Reviewed By:**  
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**Date:**  
March 2023

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is the least preferred method of hazard control. Decision unit administrators and supervisors shall first use engineering<sup>1</sup> and/or administrative controls<sup>2</sup> whenever possible to control hazards. If a hazard assessment indicates that personal protective equipment (PPE) is required, the decision unit administrator and/or supervisor shall ensure it is provided and used properly by the employee. In general, the clothing and accessories worn at the worksite must be appropriate for the task and provide adequate protection from workplace hazards. For example, loose clothing or jewelry is prohibited when working around moving parts or machinery. Shorts and sandals would be inappropriate when working with chemicals or lifting furniture or equipment.

## District administrators and/or supervisors shall ensure:

- all employees follow PPE standards required by the OHS Code and standards established through consultation with district OHS Consultants and Committees;
- the cost of personal protective equipment required by the OHS Code and/or covered under any collective agreements is borne by the employee's decision unit;
- that PPE is in good condition and performs the function for which it was designed;
- that employees are trained in the proper selection, maintenance and use of PPE;
- that eye, foot, hand, head and hearing protection meets the appropriate CSA standard listed in the OHS Code;
- all respiratory protective equipment is NIOSH approved and that staff using cartridge respirators are properly fit tested to ensure an effective facial seal<sup>3</sup>;
- staff are clean shaven when wearing a respirator; and
- if an employee is unable to wear protective equipment for medical, religious or other reasons, that alternative control measures to reduce or eliminate the hazard to the employee are implemented where feasible

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<sup>1</sup> Engineering Controls: Strategies that control hazard at the source by removing or isolating the hazard from the worker ( e.g. ventilation)

<sup>2</sup> Administrative Controls: Practices that reduce exposure by preventive maintenance or altering the way a task is performed (e.g. training, signage, safe work procedures etc.)

<sup>3</sup> Fit testing is available by appointment with an Occupational Health and Safety Consultant or persons who have successfully completed fit testing certification training.



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## Employees shall:

- wear any protective equipment issued to them and promptly report any defective equipment to their supervisor; and
- Properly use, care for and maintain their PPE.

## Resources:

Part 18 – Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code