

# **Proper Clothing**

## **A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS**

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

## **DURING THE MEETING**

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

**Proper Clothing**

Unless your job is confined to a highly specialized or unique field, the question of what to wear to work generally boils down to what is warm enough in cold weather and cool enough in warm weather.

Nothing is wrong with that except that many people do not realize what a close relationship there can be between safety and wearing the right kind of clothing.

Let's see:

Starting at the bottom--it would be foolish for construction workers to think they could wear regular street shoes and remain unharmed for very long; these workers climb up and down ladders, step on and into piles of building material debris, mount and dismount scaffolds, and ascend and descend rough stairwells, just to name a few of the hazards.

These persons need heavy-duty, rubber-grip-sole shoes, whether working inside or outside.

Inside, the floors can be slippery from oil, grease and other residue.

Outside, the terrain that construction people have to work on can be hazardous.

If a heavy piece of equipment, heavy scaffold plank or other material should drop on a person's foot who is wearing everyday street shoes, the damage would be considerable.

Next we come to pants or trousers. Never wear trousers with cuffs, because it's easy to get snagged or hung up, and have an accident.

Pants should be comfortable to the body and legs, and heavy enough to afford protection from small flying objects and weather.

Shirts, like trousers, should be of good material, heavy enough to protect the part of the body it covers from weather and flying debris. Pockets should button down. If they do not, they can be as dangerous as trousers with cuffs.

The tails should be long so they stay in the trousers, thereby affording protection to the back as well. It is also suggested that an undershirt be worn to absorb perspiration and help prevent the body from becoming chilled.

For outdoor work in cold weather, you might also wish to wear something over your shirt. This should consist of a form-fitting jacket, sweater, or whatever is preferred, but should not be tight or uncomfortable. It should not have floppy sleeves, belts or pockets that could snag or get caught, and should have a zipper because button types snag easier. It should be light and not too long.

Remember, all types of thermal clothing are available. They are lightweight and very comfortable to work in, allowing a person to be freewheeling and not encumbered by several layers of heavy wool or other types of clothing.

If you overdress for your job, this may restrict necessary movement. But if you underdress, you may be uncomfortable from the weather. Always dress for comfort and safety.