Western Michigan University

Personal Protective Equipment Policy

I. Purpose:
The purpose of this program is to ensure that, where applicable, the appropriate and necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) is selected and provided to employees. Western Michigan’s policy and program shall follow the provisions of Michigan’s Occupational Safety and Health Administrations General Industry Occupational Health Standard, Part 433, as amended September 20, 2000.

It is the goal of Western Michigan University to use engineering controls as the primary method for protecting employees. However, when additional protection is necessary, appropriate PPE will be worn.

II. Scope:
This policy and program applies to all applicable employees of Western Michigan University, including full time, part time, temporary and student employees.

PPE appropriate for the requirements of the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, Confined Space Entry, Hearing Conservation, Fall Protection and the Respiratory Protection Standard are covered by those university policies.

III. Definitions:
A. Hazard Assessment: investigating the work environment for potential hazards that could result in an injury or illness.
B. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): devices worn by workers to protect against hazards in the environment. Examples include: safety glasses, face shields, respirators, gloves, hard hats, safety-toed shoes, and hearing protection.

IV. Procedures/Requirements:
A. Application: Personal protective equipment shall be provided, used, and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition wherever chemical hazards, radiological hazards, biological hazards, or mechanical irritants are encountered in a manner capable of causing injury or impairment through absorption, inhalation, or physical contact.
B. Hazard Assessment and Equipment Selection:
   1. Each workplace shall be assessed to determine if hazards are present, or are likely to be present, that necessitates the use of PPE.
   2. If hazards are present and cannot be eliminated by engineering or work practice controls, the following steps shall be taken.
      a. Evaluate employee tasks for appropriate PPE and certify hazard assessment.
      b. Select and require to be worn, appropriate PPE.
      c. Selections shall be communicated to affected employees.
d. Fit PPE to each employee.
e. Defective or damaged PPE shall not be used.
f. If more than one employee wears the PPE, the item shall be sanitized before reissuance.

3. Head and Eye Protection:
   a. Students, visitors, and all University employees will wear approved head protection when performing or observing work where the head is exposed to injury from falling, moving, or flying objects, electrical shocks, hair entanglements, chemicals, temperature extremes, or when other types of head injury are possible as determined by the individuals exercising operational control.
   b. Hair restraints shall be worn where there is a possibility of hair entanglement, such as near revolving machinery.
   c. Approved eye and face protection shall be worn by all students, visitors, and University employees where there is a probability of injury that can be prevented or reduced by such protection. A suitable eye protector shall be worn in all posted areas and where machines or operations present a hazard of flying objects, glare, liquid splashes, injurious radiation, arc flash or a combination of these hazards. Examples of operations that require eye protection would be machine work, mowing, tree trimming, welding, grinding, buffing, chipping, chemical handling, and furnace operations.

4. Foot Protection:
   a. A person shall wear foot protection, toe protection or both if conditions of the job are likely to cause a foot injury.
   b. The department will furnish toe guards, when necessary, or the opportunity for the employee to purchase safety-toed shoes with each department paying at a minimum $40.00 per pair toward the purchase unless other arrangements are provided through a collective bargaining agreement. The receipt will be presented to the employee's supervisor for the $40.00 allowance, not to exceed more than one pair of safety shoes per year.
   c. Employees exposed to chemicals are required to wear substantial shoes. A substantial shoe is a shoe or boot that has an upper made entirely of firm leather or firm man-made leather. Shoes must cover at least the entire front, top, sides, and back of the foot and have a sole at least 1/4" thick.
   d. Other than that required for wet weather, rubber boots shall be provided by the employer and worn by the employee to protect against the hazards of wet operations.

5. Hand Protection:
   a. When conditions might cause injury to the hand or a health hazard due to hand contact with chemicals, hand protection shall be worn unless an entanglement hazard exists.

6. Body Protection:
a. All University employees who are exposed to chemicals (solvents, cleaning compounds, etc.), biological (viruses, bacteria, diseases), or physical (machinery, asbestos, etc.) agents shall wear clothing offering protection from the aforementioned agents. Minimally-accepted clothing includes:
   i. Full shirts that cover the entire back, torso, and shoulders (with or without sleeves).
   ii. Shorts or skirts that cover the legs above the knees.
   iii. Certain jobs may require longs pants or additional clothing protection such as: disposable suits, insulated clothing, etc.
   iv. Loose clothing or jewelry or clothing with fringes shall not be worn where there is a possibility of entanglement in revolving machinery or moving equipment.
   v. A person required to work in a manner such that clothing becomes wet by a condition other than weather and perspiration shall be provided with and shall wear such aprons, coats, jackets, sleeves, or other garments as required to keep the clothing dry. The material shall be unaffected by the wetting agent.

C. Training: Each employee shall be trained on the following items and certified that the employee has received and understood the required training.
   1. When PPE is necessary.
   2. What PPE is necessary.
   3. How to properly don, doff, adjust, and wear PPE.
   4. The limitations of the PPE.
   5. The proper care, maintenance, useful life and disposal of the PPE.

D. Retraining: Retraining is required when:
   1. New equipment or processes are introduced which could create new or additional hazards.
   2. A previously trained employee does not appear to have the understanding or skills required to use PPE properly.

V. Responsibilities:
   A. Supervisor:
      1. Complete and update hazard assessments and equipment selection and forward to Environmental Health and Safety.
      2. Ensure required PPE is available for all tasks.
      3. Assure the adequacy of PPE, including proper maintenance and sanitation.
      4. Remove from service any PPE that is defective or damaged.
   B. Employees:
      1. Wear all assigned PPE.
      2. Report damaged or defective PPE to your supervisor.
      3. Maintain PPE in a clean condition.
   C. Environmental Health and Safety (EHS):
      1. Conduct initial training and retraining.
      2. Maintain training certifications.
4. Provide technical information and supervisory assistance.
5. Review and revise the PPE program, as needed.
6. Review and certify hazard assessments and assist in selection of PPE.

Updated August 10, 2009