

SAFETY MEMO

June 7, 2021 – Protective Footwear



Did you know?

Wearing appropriate protective footwear is necessary when you are exposed to the risk of foot injuries in the workplace.

How to Choose Protective Footwear?

The first step in choosing protective footwear is to identify the potential hazards present in the workplace. An assessment should be made of the workplace and the tasks performed by the worker in order to identify the associated risks. In some cases, the type of protective footwear required at a facility is mandated by the internal policies of the client facility.

Potential risks for foot injuries in the workplace include:

- Risks associated with materials handled or used by the worker.
- Possibility of falling objects or being hit on the feet.
- Material or equipment that can roll over the feet.
- Sharp / pointed objects that could injure the top of the feet.
- Penetration of foreign bodies.
- Exposure to corrosive or irritating materials.
- Explosive atmospheres presenting a risk of static electricity discharges.
- Damage to electronic equipment sensitive to static electricity discharges.
- Contact with low / medium voltage conductors.
- Walking surfaces / environmental conditions to which the worker may be exposed.

Characteristics of Safety Footwear

Safety footwear characteristics must match the level of protection required for the workplace hazards. Typical types of safety footwear available include:

- Steel toes (if there is a risk of a heavy object falling).
- Sole reinforced with anti-perforation material if there is a risk of the presence of nails, metal shavings.
- Resistant to fire, heat.
- Anti-slip sole (if there is a risk of spreading oil, animal fat, wet surface).
- Protection of the top of the foot and possibly the ankle, see the calf, against cuts.
- Possible ankle support (risk of sprains).
- Electrical characteristics (insulating, anti-electrostatic).



Maintenance

Protective footwear must be well adapted to the feet with a proper fit. Boots should be laced up to the top and when laced they should fit neatly at the heel and ankle. Shoe care is essential to ensure protective footwear continues to provide protection to the user:

- Shoes should be cleaned.
- Removable insoles should be removed from the shoe and cleaned regularly.
- Watch for wear and crushing of the sole.

Workers should check their shoes and have them replaced when worn or damaged. After work, footwear must be stored in a dry and ventilated place to prevent the development of mold.

Standards

Protective footwear must meet the following standards:

- European : EN ISO 20344 *Équipement de Protection Individuelle-Méthodes d'Essai pour les Chaussures*, EN ISO 20345 : 2011 *Équipement de Protection Individuelle – Chaussure de sécurité*, EN ISO 20347 *Équipement de Protection Individuelle- Chaussures de travail*.
- American : ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials); F2413-11 Standard Specification for Performance Requirements for Foot Protection and F2412-11 Standard Test Methods for Foot Protection
- Canadian : CSA (Canadian Standards Association) CAN/CSA-Z195-02 Protective Footwear.