

SAFETY MEMO

February 14th, 2022 – Lifespan of PPE



Did you know?

Introduction

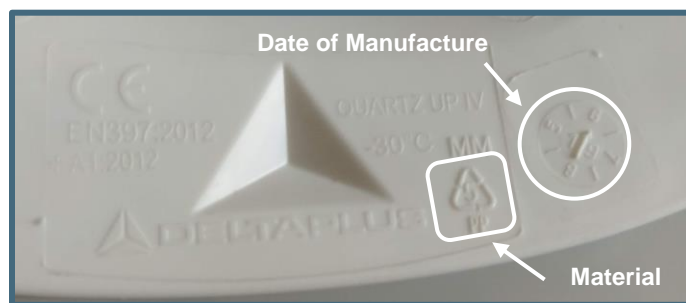
Each Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has a specific lifespan. Determining this duration is not easy, but it is important to ensure your safety. These lifetimes vary depending on the manufacturer, the type of material, how it is used, etc. Therefore, you never know how long your PPE will last.

Lifespan

PPE manufacturers are required to specify the theoretical lifespan in their instructions for use.

For information purposes only, here are the theoretical indicative lifetimes of the main PPE:

- Safety helmet (see example below):
 - Polyethylene (PE) or polypropylene (PP): 36 months
 - Polyamide (PA), polycarbonate (PC), ABS: 48 months
 - Reinforced polyester (PU-FV): 60 months
- Safety shoes: 12 months
- Handling gloves: 24 months
- Protective glasses: 36 months
- Ear protection: 36 months
- High visibility jacket: 48 months



Example: Hard Hat

To know the theoretical expiration date of a safety helmet, add the theoretical lifespan from its date of manufacture.

These two pieces of information can be found thanks to the inscriptions under the visor.

In the case presented above, the information available is:

- Material = PP. Lifespan = 36 months
- Date of manufacture = 6 19 (June 2019)

The theoretical end of life date for this helmet is therefore: 06/2022 (June 2022).

Real Life

It is rather rare for PPE to last until its theoretical expiration date. Several parameters can shorten its lifespan:

- Frequency of use
- Storage conditions
- Poor maintenance
- Obsolescence (evolution of laws, standards, materials, etc.)
- Deterioration

Conversely, it seems to be pragmatic and economical to keep little-used PPE for a very long time.

What Does the Law Say?

The regulations oblige employers to destroy (or recycle) PPE at the end of its useful life even if it still seems reusable. In the event of an accident while wearing expires and / or damaged PPE, you and your employer can be held responsible.

Check Your PPE

It is the responsibility of each worker to take care of their PPE and check the condition before use.

Have you recently checked the condition and expiry date of your PPE? If necessary, ask your manager for new PPE to ensure your safety at work.

References

Institute national de recherche et de sécurité. (2007). Les casques de protection.

