Choosing Safety Work Gloves

Protect your hands to reduce on-the-job injuries

While you may have no doubt about the need to wear gloves on the job, choosing the right pair may not be so simple.

Factors to Consider

1. Fit
   • Measure the circumference of your palm or the base of your fingers. The number of centimeters will determine your size.

2. Continuous Wear
   • Thin, disposable gloves allow for detailed work that requires the use of your fingertips.
   • Thin gloves with natural rubber, nitrile, PVC or polyurethane are not as cut resistant as other gloves, but they are easier to work in and are better for a variety of small-scale tasks.

3. Oily Grip
   • Wear sponge or foam-coated gloves that allow you to have a solid grip on slippery objects. Oil penetrates these types of gloves, making objects easier to hold, which can help you prevent dropping objects.

4. Cut resistance
   • Gloves that offer sponge nitrile coatings with a cut-resistant liner of yarns such as Kevlar® or high-performance polyethylene offer both oily grip and cut resistance. These gloves are perfect for sheet metal or other materials that present multiple hazards.
   • Some gloves have stainless steel or fiberglass yarn for higher cut resistance. However, no glove protects against serrated or moving blades.

5. Durability
   • Wear cotton or leather gloves, preferably with coating, when handling abrasive or heavy objects. Gloves coated with NRL, PVC, nitrile, neoprene and polyurethane outwear normal cotton and leather gloves by two to 10 times.
   • Gloves with coating offer the least amount of dexterity, so choose a pair with lighter-weight coatings, palm-coating or flat-dipped gloves.

6. Chemical resistance
   • When handling Portland cement, wear chemical-resistant gloves that are fully coated with chemical-resistant polymers such as nitrile, neoprene or PVC, which protect from hexavalent chromium.

Be safe and healthy on the job with these helpful tips provided by Cool Insuring Agency, Inc. and New York Electrical Contractors Association Inc.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hand injuries account for more than 1 million emergency room visits by workers per year in the United States.

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