

FOOT SAFETY - IT'S A SHOE IN FOR SAFETY

The foot is something that doesn't get much attention unless there is a problem. Therefore, to avoid possible injury, it's important to think about safeguarding the foot before undertaking any job.

Workers may be exposed to various hazardous conditions on the job, including slippery surfaces, climbing hazards, handling or working around heavy equipment and machinery and working around electricity. These different working conditions may require different safety footwear to protect the foot, and the worker, from injury.

When choosing safety footwear, you must select the legally approved shoe or boot required for the job activity, equipment, and situation. Some situations may require metal-toed boots to protect the top part of the foot. These steel-toed shoes provide extra protection over the top of the foot and can make a difference in preventing an injury in an accident.

Safety shoes or boots with impact protection should be worn when workers carry or handle materials such as heavy packages, objects, parts or tools and for other activities where objects may fall onto the foot. Workers should be required to wear safety shoes or boots with impact protection when their work involves wheeling carts that carry heavy materials; handling heavy, bulky tools (paper, fabric, carpet, lumber etc.); working around heavy pipes or in situations where a heavy object may roll over a workers foot.

Safety shoes or boots with puncture protection should be required where a worker could step on sharp objects such as nails, wires, tacks, screws, large staples, scrap metal, etc. And special types of insulating shoes or conductive shoes may be necessary for certain types of electrical work.

Employers should instruct their workers in the correct safety footwear necessary for the work they will be required to perform or situation they may encounter on the job. They should also understand the importance of wearing the protective footwear. Safety awareness and healthy workers comes from a total safety program that includes ongoing education and training in personal protective equipment on the job.

Content Source: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) (Users of Safety Talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.)

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