Personal Protective Equipment (Safety Brief)

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PACIF has developed Safety Briefs to help municipal highway supervisors maintain a high level of safety and hazard awareness among employees. We recommend using these short "tailgate trainings" on a regular basis – and **at least once a month**. If you need a particular safety topic, please contact us at losscontrol@vlct.org.

Information for Supervisors

Hazards exist in every workplace and in many different forms: sharp edges, falling objects, flying sparks, chemicals, noise, corrosive liquids, welding and arc flash among many others. When these hazards cannot be eliminated, then personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn by all employees who have exposure to them.

VOSHA requires that every employer complete a PPE assessment. Forepersons should train the crew on PPE use and certify (sign/date) the PPE assessment annually. This training/certification process should be documented in writing and kept on file with the PPE assessment. If you have not yet completed this assessment, create a list of tasks your employees perform, identify the hazards associated with each task, and list the PPE that you will use to protect employees from the identified hazards. VLCT has PPE assessment templates available for municipalities. Check our online resources or contact your loss control consultant for more guidance.

Talking Points for Training

1. **Review your completed PPE Assessment with all employees, if you have completed it**. The PPE assessment is an effective training document and can also be used to hold employees accountable if they do not wear the required equipment.

2. **Make sure employees understand that wearing PPE is not an option**, when they are exposed to physical or environmental hazards. PPE must be worn all the time,

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every time, even for the shortest duration task. Why risk getting hurt? For example, appropriate safety footwear (ASTM F-2413-11 compliant) is almost always necessary when working in municipal garages.

3. It is critical that **employees understand when they need to wear PPE.** Your PPE assessment helps you communicate this, but if the assessment is not done, take the time to discuss the work tasks that are performed and the various types of PPE that are needed for each situation or exposure. Remind employees where replacement PPE is located.

4. Make sure employees understand **how to use or wear the protective equipment.** For example, insert hearing protection must be rolled and fully inserted into the ear to be effective. When putting on muffs, hair should be moved so that it does not interfere with the sealing surface.

5. Remind employees to **keep PPE clean and to replace dirty or damaged gear.** Consider the following examples: Dirty Class 2 vests; dirty insert hearing plugs, scratched safety glasses, goggles or faceshields; dirty N-95 dust masks; chaps that have a nick or cut in them; scratched welding mask lens. All of these items should be replaced in these circumstances.

Note that the guidance in this document excludes respiratory protection, except for voluntary use of N-95 mask for control of minor levels of nuisance dust. Please contact us with respiratory protection questions or other questions related to the use, suitability or subsidy (as is permitted for footwear) of PPE.

Safety Training Attendance Roster

Trainer:	Training Date:
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