

SAFELY ON YOUR FEET

This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation. Featured are:

INTRODUCTION: A brief description of the program and the subject that it addresses.

PROGRAM OUTLINE: Summarizes the program content. If the program outline is discussed before the video is presented, the entire program will be more meaningful and successful.

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION: These sections will help you set up the training environment, help you relate the program to site-specific incidents, and provide program objectives for focusing your presentation.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Questions may be copied and given to participants to document how well they understood the information that was presented. Answers to the review questions are provided separately.

ATTENDANCE RECORD: Document the date of your presentation as well as identify the program participants. The attendance record may be copied as needed.

INTRODUCTION

Every year, hundreds of thousands of people are injured in the workplace because they weren't wearing the proper footwear. The fact that we have so many foot-related injuries indicates that employees are wearing work shoes that inadequately protect them from the hazards they face on the job. Many of us tend to think more about shoes in terms of styles, but safety shoes are more than a different style. They are part of your personal protective equipment that must effectively protect your feet from hazards that you encounter in your workplace.

This program stresses to viewers the importance of selecting, fitting, maintaining and wearing safety footwear to prevent painful foot and toe injuries. Topics include physiology of the foot, various types of safety footwear, selecting the proper shoe for the job and shoe inspection and maintenance.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

WHY FEET ARE VULNERABLE TO INJURY

- The foot is comprised of 26 bones. These tiny bones, especially your toes, are no match for heavy blows or crushing forces.
- Your feet have three built-in arches to help support your weight, but they weren't designed for standing long hours on hard surfaces.
- A good shoe should provide safety by protecting your foot where it is most vulnerable.

THE NEED FOR SAFETY SHOES

- The fact that we have so many foot-related injuries indicates that the work shoes many people are wearing are inadequate to protect them from the hazards they face on the job.
- A lot of us tend to think of shoes in terms of styles, but safety shoes are more than a different style. They are protective footwear as part of your PPE.
- While it may look like a work shoe, more importantly it must effectively protect your feet from the hazards you encounter on your job.

- The manufacturers of quality safety footwear design and develop a whole range of protective features for their products and test them to assure that they meet OSHA requirements and ANSI standards.
- After an evaluation of the potential hazards on your job, your employer may require certain types of protection. For a shoe to be effective, you must match the protection to the hazard.

SLIP-RESISTANT SHOES

- Traction becomes a real issue with your footwear whenever you have to walk or work on surfaces that are steep or slippery.
- While no footwear is 100 percent slip-proof, shoes with slip-resistant soles can help minimize your risks.
- Keep in mind that shoes can be designed for specific slip hazards. Shoes that give good traction on water don't always work well on grease and oil and vice versa.
- You can't tell what kind of slip resistance a shoe has by looking at the sole. Your best bet is to buy your shoes from a professional who can recommend the proper sole from a reputable manufacturer.

PUNCTURE-RESISTANT SHOES

- If you can encounter exposed nails or other sharp objects on your job, you run the risk of puncturing your foot.
- Besides being a painful injury, a puncture wound is difficult to clean and susceptible to such infections as tetanus.
- A shoe designed specifically to resist punctures will give you the most protection. This usually consists of a flexible steel insert that runs the length of the shoe and has been tested to meet the ANSI standards for puncture protection.
- The puncture shield will be light and flexible enough that you don't even know it's there until you need it.

STEEL-TOED SHOES

- Our toes are often in harm's way, whether we are working near heavy objects or equipment that could deliver a crushing force. The small bones of the toes are no match for serious abuse.
- The steel toes on safety footwear provide a protective cage that shields the toes from above and the sides while allowing them the freedom and flexibility to walk and work comfortably.
- The idea that a shoe with steel toes is uncomfortable because it's cold or will pinch your foot is really a myth.
- The toe caps are effectively insulated from the foot as part of the shoe's construction. They are designed to accommodate your toes without pinching or rubbing.
- In addition to shoes with steel toe guards, similar toe guards made of composite materials are available for environments where metal can pose problems. This may include metal detectors in airports or work in power plants.
- Whichever material is used, it must be tested by the manufacturer and certified to resist both the impact and crushing force requirements of the ANSI standards.
- A Class 75 certification offers the most protection and is recommended for most applications.

METATARSAL GUARDS

- Steel toes don't protect the top, or the metatarsal area, of your foot. If your feet are exposed to significant drop hazards, steel toes alone may not be sufficient to protect you.
- In these circumstances, you need to extend the protection with a metatarsal guard.
- A metatarsal guard can be either an internal or external type. In order to meet ANSI specifications, it must be built into the shoe while it is being assembled and not attached later as a separate piece of equipment.

SPECIALIZED FOOTWEAR

- If you work around electricity, shoes that are designed as EH or "electrical hazard protective" will reduce your risk of shock.
- These shoes are intended to provide a secondary source of protection against accidental contact with live electrical circuits, energized conductors or electrical devices under dry conditions.
- In some specialized work environments, such as working in potentially explosive atmospheres, it is necessary to avoid a spark jumping from your body.
- Conductive footwear drains the static charge from your body and the ground, but also makes you vulnerable to electrical shock if you come in contact with an open circuit. It should only be worn where a spark from your body presents a safety hazard.
- In some workplaces, such as electronic component assembly, static charges must be eliminated. Footwear that is rated as SD, or "static dissipative," will reduce the static charge to your body while still offering some resistance to energy flow.
- Simple oil and grease can deteriorate soles and reduce their slip-resistant properties, while some processes leave more aggressive chemicals in the environment that could eventually penetrate the shoe and attack your foot.
- You will need a professional opinion based on testing done by reputable manufacturers to know which type of shoe will stand up best to the particular chemicals that you may encounter.
- For maximum performance and comfort, your safety footwear should offer good resistance to water, both to keep your feet dry and healthy and to prolong the life of the leather.

SELECTING THE PROPER FOOTWEAR

- Since there's no such thing as a single type of safety shoe that's appropriate for every work environment, your footwear requires careful selection from among the many safety features available.
- Protective footwear is available in a wide variety of styles, including low, mid and high tops, flat soles or defined heels, shoes that slip on or lace up, shoes that are rugged or sporty and even shoes that are insulated against the cold.
- Some employers will require a certain style, such as a high-top boot to protect your lower leg and ankle from exposure.
- A slip-on boot offers convenience, while a high-top boot can be firmly laced to provide more ankle support.

- Over time, high-quality materials and workmanship will always provide the best performance, comfort and value.
- For you to do your job effectively, your safety shoes must be comfortable. This means that they should fit properly.
- When your feet ache, you can unconsciously shift your weight and put extra strain on your knees, hips and back. You can then become tired and ache all over.
- To get the best fit possible, with adequate cushioning and proper support for your arches, you should have your shoes fitted professionally.
- You want to have both feet carefully measured, preferably late in the date because activity will make them swell a bit. Also, wear your normal work socks.
- Walk around in both shoes. You want them to be comfortable, with little or no break-in.
- Remember, the steel toe will never move and you want that area to fit right away. You should have adequate room for the toes to move and there should be little slippage.

CARE OF SAFETY FOOTWEAR

- Your safety shoes represent an investment and should be regularly inspected and maintained to keep them comfortable and performing well.
- You should keep them dry, clean, conditioned and protected.
- Even carefully maintained shoes will wear out eventually and need to be replaced. Some occupations can make that happen a lot sooner than others.
- Check the soles and heels for significant wear. When the tread pattern starts to disappear, so can your traction.
- Make sure the upper is intact. Look for cuts, abrasions, torn stitching or damaged eyelets.
- When your protective footwear is beyond maintenance, your feet deserve another pair.

CONCLUSION

- Protective footwear is your last line of defense for foot-related injuries.
- You will probably not wear any other piece of protective equipment as much as you wear your safety shoes.
- The investment you make in quality footwear will pay you back many times over in personal safety and satisfaction.

PREPARE FOR THE SAFETY MEETING OR TRAINING SESSION

Review each section of this Leader's Guide as well as the videotape. Here are a few suggestions for using the program:

Make everyone aware of the importance the company places on health and safety and how each person must be an active member of the safety team.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Copy the review questions included in this Leader's Guide and ask each participant to complete them.

Make an attendance record and have each participant sign the form. Maintain the attendance record and each participant's test paper as written documentation of the training performed.

Here are some suggestions for preparing your videotape equipment and the room or area you use:

Check the room or area for quietness, adequate ventilation and temperature, lighting and unobstructed access.

Check the seating arrangement and the audiovisual equipment to ensure that all participants will be able to see and hear the videotape program.

Place or secure extension cords to prevent them from becoming a tripping hazard.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION

Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person the opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.

Explain that the primary purpose of the program is to stress to employees that safety footwear is their last line of defense against foot hazards and the importance of selecting, fitting, maintaining and wearing this equipment.

Introduce the videotape program. Play the videotape without interruption. Review the program content by presenting the information in the program outline.

Lead discussions about various of hazards at your jobsite that require specific types of foot protection. Use the review questions to check how well the program participants understood the information.

After watching the videotape program, the viewer will be able to explain the following:

- How to select safety footwear that is designed to protect them from job hazards;
- How to properly fit footwear for maximum protection and comfort;
- How to maintain comfort and protection by keeping footwear in good condition.

SAFELY ON YOUR FEET!
REVIEW QUIZ

Name _____ Date _____

The following questions are provided to check how well you understand the information presented during this program.

1. The foot is comprised of _____ bones.
 - a. 13
 - b. 16
 - c. 26
 - d. 106

2. You can identify the slip-resistant qualities of a shoe by looking at its sole.
 - a. true
 - b. false

3. A metatarsal guard can be located inside or outside the shoe, but it must be built into the shoe by the manufacturer.
 - a. true
 - b. false

4. Which type of footwear will drain a static charge from your body, but also makes you vulnerable to electric shock?
 - a. electrical hazard protective (EH)
 - b. conductive
 - c. static dissipative (SD)
 - d. none of the above

5. When being measured for safety shoes, you should have both feet carefully measured instead of just one.
 - a. true
 - b. false

6. Why should safety shoes offer good resistance to water?
 - a. to keep the feet dry and healthy
 - b. to prolong the life of the shoe's leather
 - c. to keep the steel toe from rusting
 - d. both a and b
 - e. both b and c

7. If you inspect and maintain your shoes carefully and regularly, the shoes should never wear out nor need to be replaced.
 - a. true
 - b. false

ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. c

2. b

3. a

4. b

5. a

6. d

7. b