

SAFETY ALERT - #15-2005
HEADS UP - HARD HAT LINERS AND "HOODIES"
RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 1, 2005



The Issues:

With the onset of cold temperatures, workers have been observed wearing kangaroo style hoodies under their hard hats to provide protection from the cold. There are numerous hazards associated with wearing hoodies at our job sites:

- Reduced peripheral visibility, as the hoodies billow out under hard hats. With reduced peripheral visibility, workers increase the risk of being struck by objects from the side.
- Restricted peripheral visibility also reduces worker ability to communicate effectively, including eye contact. Effective communication between workers is a simple item that will lead to safe and productive work.
- Dangling clothing, such as a hoodie draped over the shoulders outside of coveralls and hoodie drawstrings have the potential to become entangled in rotating equipment.
- There are Fire Retardant Clothing (FRC) hoodies available, but the vast majority of hoodies worn by workers are not made from FRC material.
- Since we ask that the layer of clothing worn closest to the skin be made of natural fabric such as cotton or wool, there is a misconception that natural fabrics are fire resistant. Cotton and wool do not meet Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards for fire resistance.

Proactive Accident Prevention:

In environments that have the potential for a flash fire, workers are required to wear Fire Retardant outerwear. Where workers desire thermal protection for the head and neck the outer wear must be a Fire Retardant hard hat liner or Fire Retardant hoodie.

Fire Retardant hoodies may be worn under the following conditions:

- a. When a hoodie is worn drawstrings must be pulled tight to prevent restricted peripheral visibility. Drawstrings must be tucked away to avoid being caught in machinery.
- b. If the hoodie is not worn on the head, it must be tucked inside the coveralls.
- c. It must not prevent the hard hat from being worn properly.

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