



MEL SAFETY INSTITUTE SHIFT BRIEFING

Understanding Hard Hat Labeling

According to OSHA, hard hats are must be when working in areas where there is a potential for injury to the head from falling objects or when working near exposed electrical components that may contact the head. Hard hats may also be beneficial when there is a potential for being struck by moving equipment and can also add a measure of visibility for the worker on a job site.

All hard hats must comply with ANSI Z89.1 *Protective Headwear for Industrial Workers Requirements* which is referenced into the OSHA Standard. Hard hats are comprised of an outer shell and a suspension system designed to help absorb and dissipate the force of impact while keeping a clearance between the head and the shell.

There are 2 Types and 3 Classes of hard hats:

Type 1 – Helmets intended to reduce the force of impact resulting from a blow only to the top of the head

Type 2 – Helmets intended to reduce the force of impact from a blow to the top or side of the head.

Class E – Helmets which offer the highest electrical protection (up to 20,000 volts) and protect against impact from falling objects.

Class G – Helmets which offer electrical protection up to 2,200 volts and provide impact protection from falling objects.

Class C – These lightweight helmets are not tested for electrical resistance and offer limited impact protection. These are often referred to as bump caps.

ANSI Z89.1-20014 approved helmets may have additional markings depending on manufacturer testing:



Reverse donning: Hard hats marked with a "reverse donning arrow" can be worn frontward or backward in accordance with the manufacturer's wearing instructions. They pass all hard hat protection requirements, whether worn frontward or backward.

LT & HT - Extreme temperatures: Hard hats marked with "LT" indicate that the hard hat meets testing requirements of the standard when exposed to temperatures down to -22°F. Helmets marked with "HT" indicate that the hard hat meets protective requirements when exposed to temperatures up to 140°F.

HV - High visibility - Hard hats marked with an "HV" indicate that the hard hat meets the requirements of the standard for high visibility colors.

Do not make modifications to your hard hat. That includes painting it. Solvents in many paints may denigrate the plastic shell and may hide defects or damage during pre-use inspections. Stickers are **[SELECT PER YOUR POLICY: permitted as long as they do not prevent effective pre-use inspections OR not-permitted]**.

Only use add-ons such as liners or chin straps approved by the manufacturer.

This lesson plan is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization's policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, please contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.