

TOOLBOX TALKS

Struck-by Toolbox Talk # 6

Head Protection

The **hard** hat is one of the oldest, most widely used, and most important pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) on the job. However, the hard hat cannot do its job when it is not properly worn, maintained, and replaced when needed.

Actual Incident:

Bob and his crew were putting on a new roof on a house. During the day, Bob was cleaning up debris when a falling hammer struck his hard hat. Although he experienced pain and discomfort, Bob did not require hospital admission.

[Ask the following questions.](#)

Could this incident have been avoided?

Do you work at a job that requires you to wear a hard hat?

How do you inspect your hard hat for defects which would require your employer to replace it?

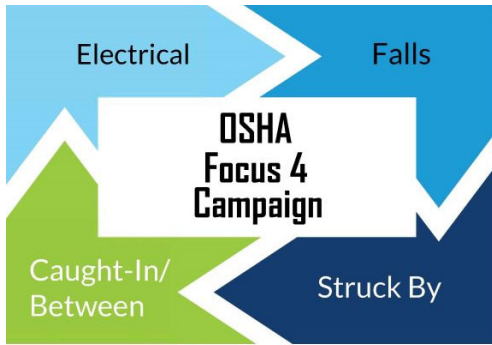
Warning and Precautions

- * Never drill holes in the hard hat shell for ventilation purposes.
- * Always wear your hardhat with the bill facing forward.
- * Always avoid contact between the hard hat and electric wires.
- * Never use a hardhat suspension that is not intended for use with a particular shell, or one that is made by a different manufacturer.
- * Never carry or wear anything inside of your hard hat between the suspension and the shell. A clearance must be maintained between the hard hat shell and the wearer's head for the protection system to work properly.
- * Ball cap or other object may limit clearance and shouldn't be worn under the hard hat.
- * Only wear products, such as winter liners or sunshades that are designed specifically to work in conjunction with hard hats. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations for use.



This information has been developed by OSHA and its partners with the intent to assist employers, workers, and others as they strive to improve workplace health and safety. This information must be understood as a tool for addressing workplace hazards, rather than an exhaustive statement of an employer's legal obligations, which are defined by statute, regulations, and standards.





TOOLBOX TALKS

Struck-by Toolbox Talk # 6 Head Protection (cont.)

Warning and Precautions (cont.)

- * Consider inspecting the hard hat daily for the following: stiffness, brittleness, fading, dullness of color, or a chalky appearance. If the shell exhibits any of these conditions or if it is obviously otherwise damaged, it should be removed from service and replaced immediately. Some hard hats need replacing after 2 years of extreme temperature exposure; others may last longer. The interior suspension should be inspected closely for cracks or tears, frayed or cut straps, loss of pliability, or other signs of wear*.

What are the hard hat practices at this site? Have you seen any modified hard hats in use?

Are you checking and maintaining your hard hat in optimal condition?

*Reference: <http://elcosh.org/document/1449/d000504/taking-care-of-your-hard-hat.html>



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