

Toolbox Talk: Personal Protective Equipment- Hand Protection / General Hazards

[Reference 1910.138 / 1926.95]

OSHA's standards for hand protection require employers to provide, and employees to use, personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves that are designed to help protect workers from injuries such as cuts, scrapes, punctures, and heat or cold. So it is vitally important to make certain that the gloves you select for use are adequate to protect against the specific hazards you come across while at work.

Protective gloves are made from a variety of materials, but not all glove materials offer adequate protection from all workplace hazards. Here is an overview of different glove materials and the type of hazards they offer protection against:

- **Sturdy gloves made from metal mesh, leather, or canvas** can help protect your hands against cuts and burns. Thick leather or canvas gloves also protect against sustained heat.
- **Leather gloves** also protect against sparks, moderate heat, blows, chips and rough objects.
- **Fabric gloves** (like cotton) protect against dirt, slivers, chafing and abrasions. They do not provide sufficient protection for use with rough, sharp or heavy materials. Adding a plastic coating will strengthen some fabric gloves.
- **Coated fabric gloves** offer general-purpose hand protection offering slip-resistant qualities. These gloves are used for tasks ranging from handling bricks and wire to chemical laboratory containers.
- **Aramid fiber gloves** protect against heat and cold, are cut and abrasive-resistant, and wear well.
- **Aluminized gloves** provide reflective and insulating protection against heat, but require an insert made of synthetic materials to protect against heat and cold.

Of course, no glove will protect your hands if you are not wearing them. And gloves will eventually wear out and need to be replaced. So if this is a problem, or if you have any concerns that the gloves you are currently using are not protecting your hands adequately, please notify your supervisor right away so that we can get you some replacement gloves when needed, and so we can schedule a new PPE hazard assessment if necessary.

