



Safety Matters

Environmental Health & Safety

No. 20

Who Pays for Personal Protective Equipment?

In an effort to reduce the injury rate of employees, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently made significant changes to their rules regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Statistics developed by OSHA showed that a significant number of workers are injured each year due to their having failed to wear appropriate PPE. The information developed by OSHA also pointed to cost as being a reason why employees had failed to obtain and wear appropriate PPE.



Therefore, OSHA requirements found in the Personal Protective Equipment section of the General Industry Standard (29 CFR 1910.123) now state that if an employer requires employees to wear PPE, the employer shall provide the PPE at no cost to the employee.

The rules exempt steel-toed footwear and prescription glasses from the requirement, but most other types of PPE (hard hats, gloves, special footwear, vests, goggles, etc.) are covered by the regulations.

Any department requiring the use of PPE, except for steel-toed footwear and for prescription eyewear as noted above, shall make the equipment available to employees at no cost to them.

Replacement equipment should also be provided; however, replacement of items intentionally damaged or lost should not be covered by the employer.

For information regarding this or any other Safety Program, please contact OSU Environmental Health and Safety at 744-7241, or go to the EHS website at <http://www.ehs.okstate.edu>

Environmental Health & Safety Department
120 Physical Plant Services Building
744-7241 (fax: 744-7148)