



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Personal Protective Equipment – High-visibility Apparel

High-visibility (or hi-vis) apparel is a familiar sight, so it's easy to take for granted. But wearing the right type can save your life.

When I got to the site, I realized I left my safety vest in the truck. I was only going to be there for a few minutes, so I didn't want to walk all the way back for it. But when I was talking to the on-site supervisor, a car whizzed by and narrowly missed me. Between the fog and my not wearing the vest, I'm not sure the driver could see me.

High-visibility safety apparel refers to clothing that workers can wear to improve how well others see them. Under the right circumstances, it can make the difference between life and death.

Consider this: according to OSHA, there is one work zone fatality every eight hours and one work zone injury every nine minutes. And who is most at risk? Unsurprisingly, it's those working in and around vehicles and traffic.

When Is High-visibility PPE Necessary?

Hi-vis safety apparel is essential for workers in low light and poor visibility, and those who work around moving vehicles like cars, trucks, forklifts, and backhoes.

American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard 107 mandates 360-degree visibility to ensure the worker can be seen from all sides.

There are three key classes of hi-visibility safety apparel:

- Class 1 provides low levels of coverage with good visibility.
- Class 2 provides moderate body coverage and superior visibility.
- Class 3 provides the most body coverage and offers visibility in poor lighting conditions and at great distances.

The type of apparel required (classified as O, R, or P) will vary depending on the task and worksite.

These are designated as off-road (type O), roadway and temporary traffic control (type R), or public safety activities (type P).

It's important to begin by conducting a thorough risk assessment to determine the exact nature of the hazards on the work site and how to best manage them with hi-visibility gear.

Assessments Should Consider:

- The nature of the work being carried out;
- Whether workers might be exposed to heat or flames (necessitating flame-resistant PPE);
- Temperature, visibility, and traffic flow, speed, and volume;

- Duration of exposure to traffic hazards;
- Background (e.g. simple, complex, rural, highway);
- Vehicle operator sightlines, particularly when moving in reverse; and
- Engineering controls and administrative controls already in place (such as barriers to separate workers from traffic)

Specific Marking:

Marking includes the following information:

- Name, trademark, or other means of identifying the manufacturer or authorized representative;
- Designation of the product type, commercial name or code;
- Size designation;
- Number of this specific ANSI/ISEA standard (ANSI/ISEA 107-2004);
- Pictogram showing the garment Class and Level of Performance for the retroreflective material;
- Care labeling with FTC symbols and maximum cycles for the cleaning process; and
- Instructions for use (if applicable).

How Workers Can Protect Themselves:

One of the most important things workers can do is to wear the PPE with which they are provided. While it seems obvious, non-compliance costs people their lives every year.

Workers should also pay attention and participate fully in training sessions that are offered. Particularly important points include:

- When to use hi-vis clothing;
- How to find the right fit;
- Limitations of hi-vis apparel;
- Storing and maintaining apparel;
- Checking for signs of wear and tear; and
- How to properly clean hi-vis apparel.

Summary:

Whether it's warehouse work or road construction, identifying the job hazards, determining the level of visibility necessary, and training workers on the proper use and care of hi-vis PPE can help ensure your employees complete their shifts without a hitch.

MAKE SAFETY A REALITY...DON'T BE A FATALITY!!

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

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