

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

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OVERVIEW

3.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requirements and responsibilities for providing clothing and equipment that protect you from hazards that you may encounter while performing job tasks.

3.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter applies to Service employees, volunteers, Youth Conservation Corps members and students, collegiate partners, and seasonal workers who need Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect them from hazards we have identified in their workplaces.

3.3 What is PPE? PPE is any clothing or equipment that is designed to protect any part of your body from workplace hazards that you can absorb, inhale, or that can physically touch you.

3.4 What is the Service policy regarding use of PPE? We must take these actions to protect you from known hazards in your workplace:

A. Provide PPE for use, at no cost to you, when equipment, engineering controls, or management controls do not provide adequate protection;

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- B.** Select PPE that meets current American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or equivalent industry standards designed to protect you from the workplace hazards we identify;
- C.** Ensure that PPE fits you properly; and
- D.** Train you on how and when to use the PPE, its limitations, and how to maintain and clean it.

3.5 What are the authorities for this chapter?

- A.** Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters ([29 CFR 1960](#)).
- B.** Consensus Standards, e.g., ANSI, International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA), and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), incorporated in the Occupational Safety and Health standards ([29 CFR 1910](#)).
- C.** [Executive Order 12196](#), Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees.
- D.** Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Federal Agency Safety Programs and Responsibilities ([Public Law 91-596, Sec. 19](#)).
- E.** Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) General Industry Personal Protective Equipment Standards ([29 CFR 1910.132-133](#) and [135-138](#)).

3.6 What type of PPE program does OSHA require? OSHA requires us to protect you from potentially hazardous conditions in your workplace. When we are unable to eliminate all identified hazards in your workplace, we must provide equipment that will act as a barrier against injury to you and your health. You can find specific information on OSHA's PPE program requirements on their protective equipment [website](#).

RESPONSIBILITIES

3.7 What are the responsibilities associated with implementing the PPE program? See Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Responsibilities associated with implementing the PPE program

| These employees... | Are responsible for... |
|---|--|
| A. The Director | (1) Approving or declining to approve Servicewide policy, and (2) Ensuring the Service has an effective and comprehensive Safety and Health program. |
| B. The Assistant Director – Business Management and Operations | (1) Ensuring that we have a PPE program, and (2) Providing sufficient support and resources to the Chief, Division of Safety and Health, to ensure that the Chief can effectively accomplish program goals. |
| C. The Chief, Division | (1) Revising and updating this chapter, as necessary, and |

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| These employees... | Are responsible for... |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| of Safety and Health | (2) Interpreting PPE program requirements and serving as a consultant to resolve Servicewide questions or issues. |
| D. Directorate members | Providing sufficient support and resources to effectively implement the PPE program in their areas of responsibility. |
| E. Servicing Safety Managers | (1) Interpreting PPE program requirements and serving as an advisor to resolve Regionwide questions and issues, (2) Evaluating implementation of the PPE program during field station safety program evaluations, and (3) Assisting Project Leaders/supervisors with developing risk assessments and Job Hazard Assessments (JHAs). See section 3.9 for more information on JHAs. |
| F. Project Leaders/supervisors | (1) Conducting thorough workplace assessments to determine if hazards are present, or likely to be present, that would make it necessary to use PPE; (2) Acting to eliminate or reduce such hazards, including the use of engineering and administrative controls, prior to issuing PPE; (3) Consulting with their responsible Safety Manager for assistance with developing hazard assessments and selecting appropriate PPE; (4) Verifying that JHAs have been performed, certifying them by signing the JHA, and formally reviewing them annually for accuracy; (5) Making sure employees have the proper PPE to protect them from workplace hazards; (6) Attending PPE training; (7) Making sure that employees are trained on how to properly select, use, maintain, and clean PPE and that they can put their training into practice; (8) Taking appropriate action if employees do not wear, properly maintain, or clean their PPE; (9) Immediately repairing or replacing defective or damaged PPE; and (10) Maintaining records on PPE assignments and training. |

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| These employees... | Are responsible for... |
|---------------------|--|
| G. Employees | (1) Wearing PPE as required, (2) Completing required PPE training, (3) Cleaning and keeping their PPE in good and serviceable condition if no one else is assigned to do this, and (4) Telling their Project Leader/supervisor when PPE needs to be repaired or replaced. |

PPE SELECTION AND USE

3.8. What are the major elements of the Service’s PPE program? Our PPE program includes:

- A.** Risk Assessments (RAs) and JHAs,
- B.** Selection of appropriate PPE,
- C.** Employee training,
- D.** Storage and inspection of PPE, and
- E.** Recordkeeping.

3.9 What is a JHA? A JHA is a process of identifying real or potential safety and occupational health risks for specific jobs within the workplace that might require employees to use PPE to protect themselves. JHAs are specific to the workplace and the duties.

A. Project Leaders/supervisors must conduct hazard assessments using [FWS Form 3-2279](#) to record their findings and recommendations for the type of PPE necessary, its use, and required employee training.

B. Exhibit 1 describes the process and the procedure for conducting a JHA.

3.10 What are the Service requirements for selecting PPE? All PPE must be of safe design and construction for the work you perform.

A. Your Project Leader/supervisor must:

(1) Purchase or allow you to use only PPE that meets ANSI, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), or equivalent industry standards; and

(2) Consider your comfort and the fit of PPE when selecting it.

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B. You (or whoever is assigned to maintain PPE) must maintain it in a sanitary condition.

3.11 Are employees allowed to buy and wear their own PPE? You may use PPE you buy for your personal convenience, although we do not recommend it.

A. Before you may use PPE you purchase for yourself:

(1) It must meet the same policy standards and be maintained in accordance with this policy, and

(2) You must receive approval from your Project Leader/supervisor before you use your personal equipment at work.

B. The Service may not be financially liable for personally owned PPE that is lost or damaged through normal use and wear. See [401 FW 2](#), Employee Claims, for information on claims and restitution for loss of or damage to approved personal equipment.

3.12 Do employees own the PPE the Service gives them to use? No. While you may have exclusive use of the Service-purchased PPE, it remains the property of the Service. Your Project Leader/supervisor may allow you to keep items such as prescription safety glasses or safety shoes/boots that are generally used by only one person.

3.13 What are the types of PPE and the requirements associated with using them? Exhibit 2 lists types of PPE often recommended for various job tasks. Your Project Leader/supervisor may require you to use other PPE based on the JHA for the work. Following are specific requirements for the types of PPE:

A. Electrical Protective Equipment: Qualified electrical workers may have to use electrical PPE, such as insulating blankets, matting, covers, line hose, gloves, and sleeves made of rubber when exposed to electrical hazards. The Project Leader/supervisor will assist qualified electrical workers to select specific PPE needed to protect them from electrical hazards in the workplace.

B. Eye Protection: Everyone who may be in eye hazard areas must wear ANSI-approved protective eyewear. Project Leaders/supervisors must have enough suitable eye protectors for everyone who might come into or through the eye hazard area. No one may enter the area without suitable eye protection. Refer to the Eye and Face Protection Selection Chart in Exhibit 3 for more information on what PPE is recommended for specific job tasks.

(1) General requirements:

(a) Project Leaders/supervisors must make sure that caution signs are placed outside eye hazard areas. The signs must require everyone to put on eye protection before entering the area.

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(b) You must wear suitable protectors when exposed to hazards from flying particles, molten metal, acids or caustic liquids, chemical liquids, gases, vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation.

(c) You must wear eye protectors with side protection if there is a hazard from flying objects. You may use detachable side protectors.

(d) Your Project Leader/supervisor must ensure that eye and face PPE is distinctly marked to easily identify the manufacturer.

(e) You must use filter lenses that have a shade number appropriate for the work you are doing if there is a hazard from light radiation (e.g., welding). See Exhibit 3 for the appropriate shade numbers for various job tasks.

(f) The Project Leader/supervisor must provide emergency eyewash facilities that meet ANSI standards in all workplaces where your eyes may be exposed to corrosive materials. You must be able to easily access the eyewash facilities in an emergency and continuously flush the eyes for at least 15 minutes. First-aid instructions for use of the eyewash must be posted nearby.

(2) *Prescription glasses:* If you wear prescription glasses and must go into an eye hazard area, your Project Leader/supervisor must:

(a) Buy prescription safety glasses (based on your current prescription—we do not pay for eye exams) for you if the exposure to eye hazards will be routine. If you request more than a basic pair of prescription safety glasses, e.g., better frames, progressive lenses, you are responsible for paying the difference between the cost of a basic pair and the ones you are requesting. Be sure to inform your Project Leader/supervisor if your eyewear prescription changes.

(b) Give you goggles designed to fit over standard eye glasses if you are only occasionally exposed to eye hazards. The goggles must fit properly over your prescription glasses.

(3) *Contact lenses:* Contact lenses may increase the hazard to your eyes in some instances. Your Project Leader/supervisor will thoroughly evaluate the hazards in your workplace to decide if you may wear contact lenses while you do your job. Contact lens wearers must wear appropriate eye and face protection devices in areas we have determined require eye protection. You **must not** wear contact lenses while you are working with or around chemicals, fumes, smoke, dust, flying particles, or molten metals that may increase your chance of injury because of the contact lenses. You must wear suitable eye protection in these circumstances.

C. Foot Protection: Your Project Leader/supervisor must provide you safety shoes or other appropriate foot protection if he/she determines your job exposes you to possible foot injury. Safety shoes or boots must meet the safety requirements for the work being performed.

(1) You must wear safety shoes or boots that will protect you from impact or compression for work activities involving heavy objects that could potentially fall on or roll over your foot.

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(2) You must wear safety shoes or boots with puncture protection if you work where you could step on sharp objects that can pierce the sole, such as nails, wire, tacks, screws, large staples, and scrap metal.

(3) You must wear appropriate types of foot protection when you work around electrical equipment or work in areas with extreme temperatures (hot or cold).

D. Hand Protection: You must use protective gloves whenever you work with or handle any equipment or materials likely to be hazardous to your hands. Project Leaders/supervisors will give you the appropriate hand protection materials based on their assessment of your workplace hazards. See Exhibit 4 for a guide to the most common types of protective work gloves and the types of hazards they can protect against.

(1) Hand hazards include:

(a) Skin absorption of harmful substances,

(b) Severe cuts or scrapes,

(c) Punctures,

(d) Chemical or thermal burns, and

(e) Harmful temperature extremes.

(2) You should use barrier creams to prevent dermatitis when you work with chemicals or with plants, such as poison ivy, etc., that cause contact dermatitis.

(3) Gloves should be replaced periodically, depending on how often you use them, types of chemical exposure, and how dirty or worn they get.

(4) Do not wear gloves around moving machinery, such as drill presses, mills, lathes, and grinders.

E. Head Protection: Depending on your work, your Project Leader/supervisor must give you head protection that resists penetration and absorbs the shock of a blow. You may also have to wear a protective hat to safeguard you against electric shock.

(1) Project Leaders/supervisors must make sure that safety helmets or hard hats are available for everyone entering a workplace or conducting work where there is a danger of head injury from falling objects or other hazards.

(2) You must wear protective head gear (i.e., safety helmet or hard hat) when working in areas or on jobs where there is a potential for head injury from falling objects. Such areas or jobs most often involve construction; moving or dumping earth, rock, and gravel; operating cranes; logging

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and clearing brush and woodlands; using a chain saw (also see [241 FW 12](#), Chain Saw Safety (Non-Fire)); and other similar types of work.

(3) Safety helmets and hard hats must meet the ANSI standards for industrial head protection, Type 1, Class G or E. Because Type 1, Class E helmets protect the head from high-voltage shock and burns in addition to protecting from falling or flying objects, electrical workers should use them.

(4) Project Leaders/supervisors must make sure that employees know how to properly adjust the headband and suspension, and how to properly store and clean their helmet or hard hat.

(5) Project Leaders/supervisors must replace safety helmets and hard hats according to the manufacturer's schedule or if the hard hat is damaged or otherwise unserviceable. If the helmet or hard hat is not marked with an expiration date, it expires 5 years from the date it is put into service. Marking the expiration date on the back of the helmet or hard hat is a good way of keeping track of this.

F. Leg Protection: You must use special equipment to prevent leg injuries when and where circumstances warrant.

(1) For example, you must wear:

(a) Leg chaps when you are operating a chain saw or working in an area where chain saws are being operated, and

(b) Leg guards to protect you from snake bite when you work in areas where you may encounter snakes.

(2) Tick gaiters or similar devices may be appropriate in areas of significant tick-borne diseases.

G. Working in, Over, or Near Water: The Project Leader/supervisor or designated representative must complete a JHA for tasks that require working in, over, or near water when there is not a railing system and work platform or other measures to protect workers from falling into the water.

(1) Workers must use of a life jacket/Personal Flotation Device (PFD) unless it is not necessary to prevent drowning, would increase risks to the wearer, or would significantly interfere with the work being performed.

(2) Examples of criteria to consider when determining whether or not a PFD is necessary include, among other things, the depth, width, and temperature of the water; if the water is moving; employees' swimming abilities; and if employees could become trapped (like in a water control structure) if they fell into the water.

(3) When a PFD is required, the Project Leader/supervisor or designated representative must determine the type of PFD appropriate and document this on the JHA.

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(4) When a PFD is not required, the Project Leader/supervisor or designated representative must evaluate and document on the JHA the necessity for alternate means of flotation or emergency rescue, such as throw rings, throw lines, an employee remaining on shore to provide assistance, etc.

(5) If an employee uses an inflatable PFD, the Project Leader/supervisor must ensure there is a process in place (and include it in the JHA) for training the user and maintaining and inspecting the PFD to make sure it is in good condition and working properly. For PFD requirements when working from a boat, see [241 FW 1](#), Watercraft Safety. Diving safety requirements are in [241 FW 10](#).

H. Respiratory and Hearing Protection: We have separate programs for respiratory and hearing protection because industrial hygiene monitoring must take place to participate in activities requiring such protection. Respiratory protection requirements are in [242 FW 14](#), and hearing protection requirements are in [242 FW 3](#).

I. Other PPE: You may be required to wear (and your Project Leader/supervisor will supply) other types of PPE (e.g., aprons, rubber boots, waders, rain gear, welding/cutting gear, insect spray (DEET and Permethrin), gaiters, etc.) to meet special conditions if you would not normally purchase the equipment or clothing items for your personal use. For example, he/she may buy you a winter liner or ear covers for your hard hat, but you buy your own sweater or shirt. There are a number of policies and standards that deal with operationally specific PPE that you must wear as you perform that work. Examples are:

- (1) [241 FW 6](#) for electrofishing PPE requirements;
- (2) [241 FW 8](#) when involved in work where injuries can be caused by the release of hazardous energy;
- (3) [241 FW 10](#) for diving operations;
- (4) [241 FW 12](#) for non-fire chain saw operations;
- (5) [242 FW 7](#) for pesticide applicators;
- (6) [330 FW 4](#) for equipment to use in flight operations in and around Government aircraft, especially if you are involved in special use or low level flights; and
- (7) [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations \(Redbook\)](#) for wildland firefighters.

3.14 What are the Service requirements for cleaning and maintaining PPE? It is important that you keep PPE clean and properly maintained. Cleaning is particularly important for eye and face protection where dirty or fogged lenses could impair your vision or cause a foreign body to enter your eye.

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A. You are responsible for cleaning and maintaining the PPE we give you to use unless your Project Leader/supervisor specifically assigns that responsibility to someone else.

B. Project Leaders/supervisors must make sure their employees' PPE is inspected, cleaned, and maintained regularly. They should establish a written schedule for PPE inspection, and assign someone the responsibility for monitoring the condition of all PPE.

C. Employees **must not**:

(1) Share PPE until it has been properly cleaned and sanitized (you will receive PPE for individual use whenever possible), or

(2) Use defective or damaged PPE.

D. When not in use, store goggles and safety glasses in a location where they will not be damaged. You can store them in a Ziploc®-type baggie for added protection from potential environmental contamination.

3.15 What PPE should employees wear when responding to an emergency oil spill or other hazardous waste situation?

A. Project Leaders/supervisors and employees should review individual facility Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure plans for actions to take when a spill or incidental release occurs on Service lands.

B. Whether the hazardous substance is known or unknown, only employees who have been properly authorized, trained, and provided appropriate PPE are allowed to perform operations involving potential exposures. See [242 FW 6](#), Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response, for more information.

TRAINING AND RECORDKEEPING

3.16 What training do employees need if they have to wear PPE?

A. The Service must provide you with training on the following, at a minimum:

(1) When PPE is necessary;

(2) What PPE is necessary for which job tasks;

(3) How to properly put on, remove, adjust, and wear PPE;

(4) The limitations of the PPE;

(5) The proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of the PPE; and

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(6) The JHA or RA that covers operations requiring specific PPE. Your Project Leader/supervisor should give you the opportunity to provide feedback on the JHA or RA and make recommendations for updates/revisions.

B. This training can be presented through any method your Project Leader/supervisor finds effective, such as videos, worksite briefings, demonstrations with hands-on exercises, or formal training.

C. Your Project Leader/supervisor must require you to demonstrate that you understand the PPE training and that you can use your PPE properly before allowing you to use it on the job.

D. Your Project Leader/supervisor must also ensure that you get additional or refresher training if there are changes in your workplace conditions or in the types of PPE you must use, or when he/she thinks you need to have additional PPE training.

3.17 What are the recordkeeping requirements for the PPE program? Project Leaders/supervisors must:

A. Document and maintain records of PPE training. Records must be kept onsite, in a Regional training database, or by documenting it in the Department's Learning Management System. Training records must include:

(1) Name of person trained,

(2) Date of the training, and

(3) Type of training provided.

B. Certify in writing that they have evaluated each workplace for hazards when there is a potential that employees need to use PPE.

(1) They must use [FWS Form 3-2279](#) to meet this requirement.

(2) Project Leaders/supervisors must keep the completed FWS Form 3-2279 until the operation changes and a new one would be required, or the operation is no longer occurring.

/sgd/ Margaret Everson
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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