



## **OSHA Requires Personal Protective Equipment Assessments**

Did you know that OSHA requires PPE assessments? Under the General Industry standards (1910.132-138), OSHA requires employers to conduct and document hazard assessments for each job (some refer to this as a JSA or Job Safety Analysis). It is both a regulation and a very basic safety principle; you have to know what the hazards are if you are going to protect employees from it.

A hazard assessment is done by breaking a job into each task and then determining the hazard present as each task is performed. Example: opening a box with a box cutter. Do you have to position the box a certain way (based on the size or style)? Is the box heavy? Do you have to lift it from one level to another? When you are cutting it open, is your hand without the knife exposed to a cut hazard or is there a possibility that you will cut past the box and hit your leg or other body part? Is there a possibility that something could get into your eyes? Since you have identified a cut hazard, is there a way to eliminate the hazard by how you open the box? If not, what PPE would protect the hand or the body parts? These are all considerations when developing a hazard assessment.

It is much more complicated when your assessment reveals a respiratory hazard. You have to know how much is in the air to determine what level of protection is needed, but still you have to evaluate to know how to protect.

Once you have determined your hazards accurately, you can evaluate the level of protection needed for specific tasks. You can decide the cut level of the glove, bump cap or hard hat, steel toed shoes with or without metatarsal protection, safety glasses, goggles or face shield, etc. It all starts with an accurate Hazard

Assessment and knowing what the hazards are. And our Safety Services Team is here to assist with and implement such assessments.

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