



Inspection and Care of Rubber Goods

Rubber goods such as electrical gloves, sleeves, and blankets are essential when an application calls for protection from live electrical current. These products must be handled and stored properly in order for them to be effective and last as long as possible. Here are a few guidelines for the proper handling and storage of rubber goods:

- Avoid contact with sharp objects, extreme heat, chemicals, and oils
- Do not fold rubber goods
- Do not store gloves/sleeves inside out
- Always use leather protectors when wearing electrical gloves
- Store rubber goods in bags and containers when not in use
- Store rubber goods in cool, dark, dry locations

In addition, it is extremely important that rubber goods are visually inspected before first use, before each use, and after having been left unattended (required by ASTM F1236-96). An air test using an inflator is the best method for a visual inspection of electrical gloves.

For a visual inspection:

- Check between fingers and cuff line
- Turn gloves/sleeves inside out and fully inspect again
- Roll blankets and inspect both sides and roll from different corners

Rubber goods can be compromised by wear and tear, age, extreme temps/temp changes, moisture, humidity, nicks, cuts scratches, mold, chemicals, foreign matter, snags, etc. Damaged goods should be taken out of service immediately

and either sent to a testing facility or discarded. Here are just a few of the things to look for during a visual inspection:

- Age cracks (become worse over time)
- Cuts (grow larger under stress)
- Depressions/indentations

Making sure your rubber goods are clean will make a visual inspection much easier. Dirt, oils, etc. can also be damaging to the rubber and/or be conductive. Use an unscented, all-natural dish soap if nothing else is available that is specifically meant for rubber goods cleaning.

Lastly, here are the guidelines for when to send in rubber goods to a testing lab:

- Gloves – 30 days optional, 60 days optional, 6 months required
- Sleeves/Blankets – 60 days optional, 6 months optional, 1 year required
- Suspected damage should mean any product is sent in for testing
- Do not send in rubber goods that are clearly damaged and will most likely fail testing

Please keep in mind that rubber goods are not meant to be used at the test voltage ratings (Max Use Voltage vs. Test Voltage) and that rubber goods that fail testing at the lab can be returned for training purposes (things to recognize during a visual inspection).

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