

HAND PROTECTION BASICS

- **Some tasks endanger your workers' hands to danger. These hazards may include:**
 - Sharp objects or equipment parts (*glass, edges of metal parts in process; knives, shears*)
 - Abrasive objects or equipment parts (*goods in process; sanders*)
 - Pointed objects that can penetrate skin (*awls, icepicks, drill bits*)
 - Hot objects or cold objects (*frozen food, welding equipment*)
 - Chemicals that can be absorbed by skin & irritate it (*solvents, dish soap, detergents*)
 - Corrosive/caustic chemicals (*battery acid, drain cleaner, solvents*)
 - Infectious agents (*human or animal blood, body fluids, or wastes*)
 - Vibrating or impact tools that subject hands to stress
- **Safety equipment companies can supply protective gloves. Prior to purchasing, you should strive to eliminate or minimize hazards.** Actions you can take include:
 - Arrange equipment to keep hands from danger areas (*e.g. automation to place stock*)
 - Provide tongs to place stock in danger areas (*e.g. near blades or punches*)
 - Install guards that keep fingers out of danger area but allow stock to be placed
 - Install two-handed "start" buttons which must be pressed simultaneously in order to force workers to keep hands out of danger areas
 - Pack hot or cold items in insulated containers
 - Obtain vibrating or impact tools that absorb energy instead of transmitting it to hands
 - Use milder soaps, detergents, & solvents
 - Develop, implement, & enforce safety rules (*e.g. keeping fingers away from moving parts*)
 - Require workers to wash hands after handling chemicals
- **When selecting protective gloves, you should:**
 - Identify hazards to your workers' hands, remembering their hands may be exposed to more than 1 hazard (*e.g. metal workers holding sharp parts & cutting oils; meat cutters holding cold meat & sharp knives*)
 - Select gloves that protect against applicable hazards
 - Select gloves that fit properly & comfortably (*ill-fit & discomfort lead workers to avoid wearing & may cause gloves to become caught in danger areas; reduced dexterity may lead to dropping heavy or sharp objects on feet or other body parts*)
- **After you have selected gloves, you should:**
 - Inform workers about the hazards to their hands & their need to wear gloves
 - Inform workers about the possible need to use different glove types for different hazards (*e.g. insulated glove to carry meat from freezer, metal mesh glove to protect hand when cutting meat*)
 - Inform workers about proper use, care, & maintenance of gloves
 - Require workers to remove gloves & wash hands thoroughly to prevent contaminating coworkers