

HOODIE SAFETY

As the weather begins to cool, we start to bring out the warmer clothing. Hoodies are comfortable and warm and are often a common choice for many workers. But hoodies can pose several safety risks on a worksite, especially on an industrial manufacturing worksite.

Safety should always be the top priority in any workplace and the clothing you wear plays a critical part in keeping you safe.

POTENTIAL HOODIE HAZARDS:

- REDUCED VISIBILITY AND HEARING
- ENTANGLEMENT
- FABRIC RISKS
- HARD HATS



BC Forest Safety

HOODIE SAFETY



REDUCED VISIBILITY AND HEARING:

- Wearing the hood can obstruct your vision by creating a tunnel effect and narrowing your field of vision, especially your peripheral vision (side vision) making it harder to see hazards or moving equipment.
- A hoodie can muffle sounds and limit your ability to hear critical communication, equipment, signals or alarms.

ENTANGLEMENT HAZARDS AND RESTRICTED MOVEMENT:

- Tight or bulky hoods restrict head and body movement, especially when wearing PPE.
- Hood strings and loose fabric pose a significant safety risk in environments with moving parts. And modifying the drawstrings will not eliminate the hazard.
- **OHS Guidelines Part 8 (OHSR 8.10) refers to the regulations on Personal Clothing and Accessories.** These regulations prohibit loose clothing, jewelry and require containment of long hair.

Personal clothing and accessories:

- 1) *The personal clothing of a worker must be of a type and in a condition which will not expose the worker to any unnecessary or avoidable hazards.*
- 2) *If there is a danger of contact with moving parts of machinery or with electrically energized equipment, or if the work process presents similar hazards:*
 - a) *the clothing of the worker must fit closely about the body,*
 - b) *dangling neckwear, bracelets, wristwatches, rings or similar articles must not be worn, except for medical alert bracelets which may be worn with transparent bands that hold the bracelets snugly to the skin*

FABRIC RISKS:

- Hoodies are often made of synthetic fabrics which are highly flammable. If exposed to flames or sparks, these materials can ignite quickly and cause severe burns. And certain fabrics may not provide adequate protection against chemical spills or splashes, increasing the risk of skin irritation or burns.
- Synthetic fabrics can generate static electricity, which can be dangerous in environments with flammable gases or dust.
- The quality of some hoodie fabrics may not withstand the rigors of a workplace, leading to wear and tear that can compromise safety.
- Hoodies might be warm but can also cause excessive heat retention leading to overheating.

HARD HAT INTEGRITY:

- Wearing a hoodie can compromise the fit of a hard hat, making it loose and unstable and more likely to shift or slip during movement or impact.
- OSHA warns that wearing a hoodie under a hard hat reduces the impact absorption clearance needed to disperse the impact force designed to protect the skull.
- Consider using winter hard hat liners or balaclavas specifically designed for hard hats. They help maintain warmth without compromising safety.

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