

## Home and Recreational Activities

Activities such as tree trimming, chain saw use, and home improvement projects may require the use of head protection.



Cycling, the operation of a variety of recreation vehicles, as well as other activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, white water rafting also require the use of CSA approved head protection.



Make sure you set the right example for your family and protect yourself.



For more information, refer to current applicable Occupational Health and Safety Legislation.



**The Alberta Construction Safety Association's** mission is to provide quality advice and education for the construction industry that will reduce human suffering and financial costs associated with workplace incidents. This brochure is part of a series, **The Toolbox Brochures**, which are available on a variety of safety topics. If you have any questions or comments please contact:



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# Head Protection



## Making Safety A Way Of Life



## The Alberta Construction Safety Association

## Head Protection at Work

In construction, a hard hat is a critical piece of personal protection. It is the last line of defense against objects impacting one of your most vital assets—your head. If your hard hat is not in good condition, or is used improperly, the consequences could be tragic.



## Type of Head Protection

If there is a potential danger of injury to a worker's head at a work site, the employer must ensure that the worker wears head protection that complies with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

Most head protection is composed of two parts:

- The shell (light and rigid to deflect blows)
- The suspension (to absorb and distribute the energy of the blow)

Both parts of the headwear must be compatible and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions. If attachments are used with headwear (e.g., earmuffs/face shields), they must be designed specifically for use with the specific headwear used.



## Inspection & Maintenance

Keep your hard hat clean and free of solvents, adhesives, grease, and oil. Leaving a hard hat on a dashboard of a vehicle, where the heat from the sun may be intensified as it passes through the glass or on top of a heat register, could compromise the strength of the hard hat.



CSA International advises against applying stickers on hard hats for three reasons:

- The adhesive on many stickers may react with the plastic and degrade the strength of the shell.
- Metallic stickers may pose a special problem. They may conduct radiant heat from the sun creating a "hot spot" which would also weaken the plastic.
- Stickers themselves may hide damage or weaknesses in the shell.

The usual maintenance for headgear is simply washing with a mild detergent and rinsing thoroughly.

Here are some additional do's and don'ts for maintaining your head protection:

### Do

- Replace headgear that is pitted, holed, cracked, or brittle.
- Replace headgear that has been subjected to a blow even though damage may not be seen.
- Remove from service any headgear when its physical integrity is in doubt.
- Replace headgear and components according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Consult regulations or your supplier for information on headgear.

### Do Not

- Drill, remove peaks, alter the shell or suspension in any way.
- Use solvents or paints on the shell (makes shell "break down").
- Put chin straps over the brims of certain classes of headgear.
- Carry anything in the hard hat while wearing it.



## When should a hard hat be replaced?

The effective life of a hard hat varies with the make and model. Each manufacturer is required to provide this information on or with each hard hat sold. They advise that once the hard hat has exceeded its effective life, it should be replaced.

If the hard hat has been subjected to a heavy blow or has been stressed by being run over or compressed, it must be replaced.

