

**ESSENTIAL
STANDARD
no.24**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



KEY MESSAGES

- PPE is worn or held in order to protect a person against risks.
- PPE must be: free of charge to employees, suitable for tasks and risks, compatible with other PPE, comfortable and comply with BS standards and Thames Water minimum standards.
- All PPE should be specific to the task being undertaken.

1. Introduction

Workplace risks must be mitigated by implementing control measures but, as an extra precaution, companies must also provide employees with appropriate PPE.

2. What is PPE?

PPE is gear that is worn or held by a person and protects them from one or more risks to their health and safety.

3. Regulation Requirements

Work Regulations 1992 state that PPE must be supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways.

It also states PPE must be:

- suitable for tasks and risks,
- compatible with other PPE,
- comfortable and
- comply with BS standards.

4. Assessing PPE Suitability

Key questions to ask:



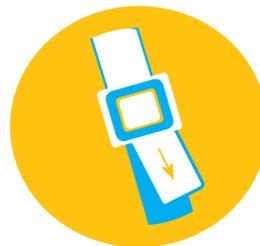
What are the needs of the job and the demands it places on the wearer?



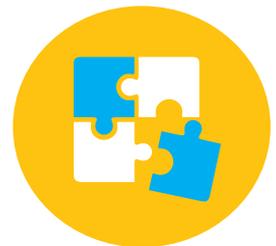
Is it appropriate for the risk involved and the conditions where exposure may occur?



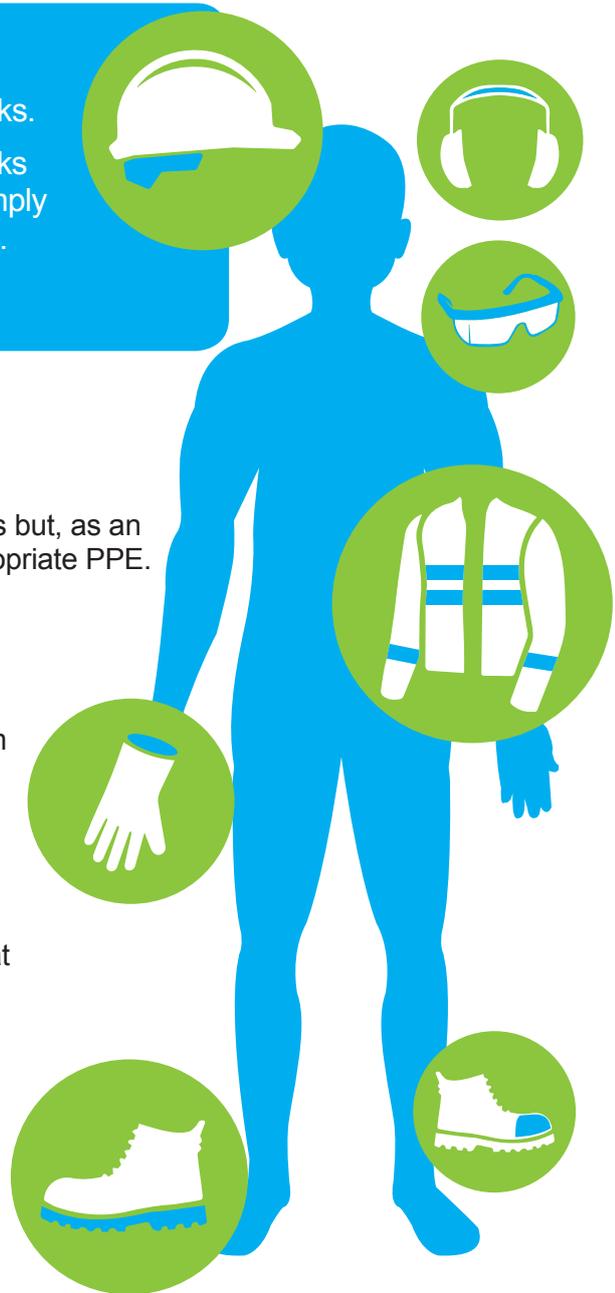
Does it prevent or control the risks involved without increasing the overall level of risk?



Can it be adjusted to fit correctly?



Is it compatible with other PPE being worn?



5. Thames Water Minimum Standards for PPE

The most common injuries sustained are to the head, hands, feet, body and eyes so it's our policy that hard hats, gloves, safety footwear, Hi-viz outerwear and glasses are worn on all operational sites.

The below table sets out the minimum PPE requirements for various roles and activities:

	Indicative role / activity (not an exhaustive list)	Safety footwear 	Hi-viz outerwear 	Head protection 	Gloves 	Eye protection 
Customer Facing Activity (visiting customer premise)	Meter readers, Sales Investigation	M	N/E	TS	TS	TS
TW Offices	Security guards, cleaners, catering staff	M	TS	TS	TS	TS
TW Operational Sites (except in designated PPE free routes)	All site personnel and contractors on Water, Wastewater or Operational Depots	M	M	M	M	M
TW Sites - Construction (except in designated PPE free routes)	Any segregated construction site within the boundary of a TW operational site	M	M (2 BAR – LONG SLEEVE)	M	M	M
Offsite Construction (any excavation activity not on a TW site)	Repair and maintenance, external meter installations, VMR, CSL, main laying	M	M (2 BAR – LONG SLEEVE)	M	M	M
Offsite Non-construction (public highway or other locations not on a TW site)	NSTs, trunk sewers, waste network (non-civils)	M	M (2 BAR – LONG SLEEVE)	M	M	M
Other non-TW construction sites or premises	Developments, private workplaces, factories, etc.	Not below TW minimum standards.				
Additional notes:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Any change from minimum standard will require a documented site-specific risk assessment, for the day of operation. All PPE should be specific to the task being undertaken, i.e. welding goggles whilst welding. 					

M Mandatory

TS Required according to a task-specific assessment

N/E Not essential, unless on the public highway

6. General Advice on Hazards and PPE



HEAD:



Impact from falling or flying objects and bumping or hair entanglement
Head protection



EYES:



Chemical or metal splashes, dust, projectiles, gases and vapours and radiation

Safety spectacles, goggles, face shield and visors

Note: Prescription safety eyewear is available



LUNGS:



Dust, vapours, gases and oxygen-deficient atmospheres

Disposable filtering face pieces or respirators, half- or full-face respirators and breathing apparatus



ARMS & HANDS:



Abrasion, temperature extremes, cuts and punctures, impact, chemicals, skin infection, disease or contamination

Gloves and gauntlets



BODY:



Abrasions, temperature extremes, adverse weather, chemical or metal splashes, contaminated dust, excessive wear or entanglement of clothes

Conventional or disposable overalls, boiler suits, specialist and high-visibility clothing



LEGS & FEET:



Wet conditions, slipping, cuts and punctures, falling objects, chemical splashes and abrasion

Safety boots with protective toe caps and penetration-resistant midsoles, protective Wellingtons and protective waders

7. Issuing PPE



- Record the issue of PPE to an individual.
- Ensure that PPE no longer required is returned and accounted for.
- Disposal of unused PPE must follow company procedures. This ensures the removal of the brand and reduces the threat of distraction burglary should it fall into the wrong hands.

8. Training

Ensure workers are trained on:



- why and when PPE is needed;
- PPE limitations;
- the importance of reporting PPE defects so it can be repaired or replaced; and
- the importance of wearing PPE all the time while exposed to a risk – no exceptions.

9. Maintenance

Employees must take care of PPE by:



- storing them in a dry and clean location e.g. cupboard;
- keeping them clean;
- following the manufacturer's maintenance schedule and shelf life dates; and
- ensuring replacement PPE is readily available.

10. Thames Water Branding

Some of our partners are required to use Thames Water branding on their work-wear and PPE, which must be bought via the current framework provider. This ensures consistency when it comes to brand, quality and the level of protection.



Other supply chain partners who are outside of the branding requirements are welcome to use the same provider and enjoy the benefits of good quality approved PPE, however this will not have the Thames Water logo.