

MARSHALL MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

GUIDELINES FOR THE CARE AND USE OF HARDHATS

Reviewed August 2004

Inspection of Hardhats

Hardhats should be inspected before each use. Check for the following:

- Check the shell for cracks (even hairline cracks), dents, brittleness, discoloration, and wear. Cracks or dents can reduce the degree of safety a helmet provides. Exposure to temperature extremes, sunlight, or chemicals can shorten the life of the hardhat. Replace hardhats that are cracked, or look chalky or dull.
- Pay special attention to the condition of the suspension system. Check for pliability of the suspension. Look for cracks, breaks, and torn or frayed straps. A hard hat should not be used if signs of damage to any of these parts are found.

Most manufacturers recommend the following replacement schedule:

- Suspension – replace after no more than 12 months
- Shell – replace after no more than 5 years

Remember that these are MAXIMUM useful life guidelines. Wear or damage noticed during a regular inspection MUST be the determining factor for replacement. ALWAYS replace the hardhat after it has withstood impact or penetration.

Proper Use and Care of Hardhats

- NEVER wear a baseball cap under the hardhat.
- NEVER store items such as gloves or earplugs between the suspension and the shell liner.
- NEVER drill holes in your hardhat.
- Self-adhesive stickers are permissible AS LONG AS THEY ARE NOT closer than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the edge of the shell. Stickers should not be placed where they will cover any cracks or other damage.
- NEVER paint a hardhat and avoid getting paint on the hardhat. Paint and other material such as solvents, adhesives, or gasoline may attack and damage the hardhat's shell, thereby reducing the degree of protection originally provided. They can also reduce the dielectric properties.
- Normally, the brim of the hard hat should be facing forward. You may wear your hardhat backward AS LONG AS THE PRODUCT IS DESIGNED for such use and you make sure to turn the suspension so that the nape strap remains on the nape of the neck.
- Keep hardhats out of the rear or front window shelf of vehicles. Sunlight and heat can affect the degree of protection the hat provides.
- Clean hardhats once a month in warm, soapy water. Scrub and rinse the shell with clear, hot water.
- DO NOT stress the hardhat by sitting on it or compressing the sides.
- The hardhat SHOULD be worn square on the head, not tipped forward, backward, or to either side.
- ALWAYS replace the hard hat after it has withstood an impact or penetration.