

## Procedure Index

Section	Title
1	Introduction
2	What is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
3	What the Regulations require
4	Assessing the suitability of PPE
5	Thames Water minimum standards for PPE
6	General advice on hazards and types of PPE
7	Issuing PPE
8	Training
9	Maintenance
10	A summary of the main points

## Toolbox talks

Having read this procedure all key points must be communicated to all staff that undertake and or are involved in this activity. This must take the form of a toolbox talk and recorded along with signatures of attendee's on form SHE 13 which is available from the Health, Safety and Environment section of the Portal and from the Health and Safety Manual (see section 2 managers' activities and forms).

If you require any further assistance in the development of the tool box talk please contact your Safety, Health & Wellbeing team member.

## 1. Introduction

Managers have a responsibility to ensure that where there are residual risks to health and safety (following the implementation of other control measures) these are adequately controlled by the provision of appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE).

It should be pointed out that where it is necessary to issue PPE, this should always be selected from the Liscombes PPE catalogue, which can be found on SAP. Managers who need to issue PPE should ensure that the item selected is appropriate to the risk (refer to the description in the catalogue). Managers must also ensure that the item is suitable for the wearer i.e. that it can be adjusted to fit the wearer.

Reference should also be made to relevant risk assessment guidelines in Section 3 of the Health and safety Manual where, in some cases, specific items of PPE are mentioned.

## 2. What is Personal Protective Equipment?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is all equipment which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects the wearer against one or more risks to their health or safety', e.g. safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses.

## 3. What the Regulations require?

The main requirement of the PPE at Work Regulations 1992 is that personal protective equipment must be supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways.

It is also necessary to ensure that PPE:

- Is suitable for the risk and task?
- Is comfortable and wearable
- Is compatible with other forms of PPE in use
- Conforms with BS standards

## 4. Assessing the suitability of PPE

Consider the following when choosing PPE from the catalogue (bearing in mind the descriptions given there):

- Is it appropriate for the risks involved and the conditions at the place where exposure to the risk may occur? For example, eye protection designed for providing protection against pesticides will not offer adequate face protection for someone using an angle grinder to cut steel or stone.
- Does it prevent or adequately control the risks involved without increasing the overall level of risk?
- Can it be adjusted to fit the wearer correctly? What are the needs of the job and the demands it places on the wearer? For example, the length of time the PPE needs to be worn, the physical effort required to do the job and the requirements for visibility and communication.
- If more than one item of PPE is being worn, are they compatible? For example, does a particular type of respirator make it difficult to get eye protection to fit properly?

If you become aware of any issues relating to PPE i.e. it is no longer effective and the approved list does not hold suitable equipment to replace it, you must contact your health and

# HSP18 Personal Protective Equipment



safety advisor to discuss this. The Safety, Health & Wellbeing Team will then discuss this at the PPE Committee meeting to identify replacement options.

## 5. Thames Water minimum standards for PPE

Thames Water undertakes a wide range of roles and activities. The levels of protection of these differing types of tasks and activities will vary. The following table sets out the minimum level of PPE requirement for types of roles – it **does not** state the type or manufacture of equipment.

	<i>Indicative role / activity (not an exhaustive list)</i>	<b>Safety footwear</b>	<b>Hi-viz outerwear</b>	<b>Head protection</b>	<b>Gloves</b>	<b>Eye protection</b>
<b>Customer Facing Activity</b> (visiting customer premise)	Meter readers, Sales Investigation	<b>M</b>	<b>N/E</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>TS</b>
<b>TW Offices</b>	Security guards, cleaners, catering staff	<b>M</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>TS</b>
<b>TW Operational Sites</b> (except in designated PPE free routes)	All site personnel and contractors on Water, Wastewater or Operational Depots	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>TW Sites - Construction</b> (except in designated PPE free routes)	Any segregated construction site within the boundary of TW operational sites and offices	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b> (2 bar - long sleeve)	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Offsite Construction</b> (any excavation activity not on a TW site)	Repair and maintenance, external meter installations, VMR, CSL, Main laying	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b> (2 bar - long sleeve)	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Offsite Non-construction</b> (public highway or other locations not on a TW site)	NSTs, Trunk Sewers, Waste Network (non-civils)	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b> (2 bar - long sleeve)	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Other non-TW construction sites or premises</b>	Developments, private workplaces, factories etc.	<b>As per the site rules of the company or principal contractor managing the site</b>				
<b>Additional notes:</b>	1) Any change from minimum standard will require a documented site specific risk assessment, for the day of operation. 2) all PPE should be specific to the task being undertaken, i.e. welders gloves when welding					

### Key:

**M** = mandatory wear - however items should be specific to the task being undertaken

**TS** = required according to task specific assessment

**N/E** = not essential, unless on the public highway

## 6. General advice on hazards and types of PPE

**Eyes** – Hazards to eyes include, chemical or metal splashes, dusts, projectiles, gases and vapours and radiation. PPE options available include safety spectacles, goggles, face shields and visors. Prescription safety eyewear is available to those who require prescription glasses for working.

**Head** – Hazards to the head include impact from falling or flying objects, risks of bumping and hair entanglement. Any head protection should also include provision for fitting of chinstraps to avoid equipment falling off, especially when working at height.

**Breathing / Lungs** – Hazards to the lungs include dusts, vapours, gases and oxygen deficient atmospheres. Options include: disposable filtering face pieces or respirators, half or full face respirators and breathing apparatus.

**Protecting the Body** – Hazards include, temperature extremes, adverse weather, chemical or metal splashes, contaminated dust, excessive wear or entanglement of own clothing. Options include conventional or disposable overalls, boiler suits, specialist and high visibility clothing.

**Hands and arms** – Hazards include abrasion, temperature extremes, cuts and punctures, impact, chemicals, skin infection, disease or contamination. Options include gloves and gauntlets.

**Feet and legs** – Hazards include, wet conditions, slipping, cuts and punctures, falling objects, chemical splashes, and abrasion. Options include safety boots with protective toe caps and penetration resistant midsoles, protective Wellingtons and protective waders.

## 7. Issuing PPE

When issuing PPE, always remember to record the issue of PPE to an individual on the PPE Issue Form (SHE 14) and keep a record of it. Make sure that your team understand the importance of reporting any defects in their PPE so that it can be replaced or repaired.

## 8. Training

Make sure anyone using PPE is aware of why it is needed, when it is to be used, repaired or replaced and its limitations. Use the toolbox talk part of relevant risk assessment for this purpose. Because PPE is the last resort, after other methods of protection have been considered, it is important that users wear it all the time they are exposed to the risk. Never allow exemptions for those jobs which take 'just a few minutes'.

Use the Task Observation Checklist (SHE 6A) to periodically monitor whether or not PPE is being used.

## 9. Maintenance

Make sure that PPE is:

- Well looked after and properly stored when it is not being used, for example in a dry, clean cupboard.
- Kept clean and in good repair follow the manufacturer's maintenance schedule (including recommended replacement periods and shelf lives).
- Make sure suitable replacement PPE is always readily available.



## 10. A Summary of the Main Points

Are there ways (other than PPE) in which the risk can be adequately controlled, e.g. engineering controls?

If not, check that:

- PPE is provided in accordance with any relevant risk assessment guidelines.
- Those using it are adequately trained in its safe use.
- It is properly maintained and any defects are reported.
- It is returned to its proper storage after use.