

High-Visibility Safety Apparel

Introduction:

The safety of employees is the main concern for all companies. Personal Protective Equipment in the form of high-visibility safety apparel is essential for all employees working near roadways, warehouses, moving vehicles, trucks, and other machinery including backhoes, forklifts, and skid steers. High-visibility apparel is a warning indicator to alert vehicle and machine operators of workers' presence in the area, especially if there is low light or poor visibility conditions.

Discussion Points:

- What is High-Visibility Safety Apparel?
- ANSI/ISEA 107-2020 standard
- What are the high-visibility colors?
- Training, inspection, use, and care of high-visibility apparel
- What high-visibility clothing is often worn by workers?



Discussion:

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in conjunction with the International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA) has developed the ANSI/ISEA 107-2020 standard. This regulation sets performance criteria for high-visibility safety apparel, and OSHA has set guidelines with its own interpretation. The standard designates "Type" and "Performance Class" categories; there are three Types (O, R, P) and four Performance Classes (1, 2, 3, E). Many workers are required by state regulations to wear high-visibility apparel. Although high-visibility safety apparel may not be required by law for your industry, many companies choose to have their workers wear the clothing for protection in hazardous situations. Clothing with high visibility helps to increase safety and reduce the risk of accidents. Companies should stay up to date with state regulations for worker uniforms. It is recommended to follow OSHA guidelines and ANSI standards.

High-visibility safety apparel is made of fluorescent material. The material has been approved in three background color options: fluorescent lime (yellow), orange, and red. Fluorescent materials enhance visibility and stripes of reflective material are added to meet ANSI/ISEA standards. Employers should select colors depending on the environment in which employees work. The colors should provide the best contrast possible. If the workers will be working around yellow-colored equipment, orange might be a better color choice.

Vests are the most common safety apparel worn by workers, but depending on the industry and weather, workers may choose to wear high-visibility jackets, coveralls, pants, t-shirts, gloves, and hats. The clothing should be comfortable to wear, and fitted to the person. Workers should receive training in the use and care of safety apparel. Training should include inspecting for wear and tear, specifics to provide the best safety possible, and instructions for cleaning. Proper care of the apparel is important to maximize the lifespan of the fluorescent and reflective materials. It's important to remember that high-visibility clothing increases the safety of workers, and is required by state regulations and/or company policy; if you are not seen, you are not safe.

As always, stay safe out there!

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