PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

In this chapter you will learn about:
- Disposable protective clothing;
- Non-disposable protective clothing;
- Eye protection;
- Gloves;
- Hard hats;
- Goggles;
- Hearing loss protection; and
- Safety equipment training.

Protective Clothing
A respirator is one of the most important pieces of equipment for protecting you from lead. But whenever you work with lead, you must also wear protective clothing.

You will probably wear a disposable suit. The suit includes coveralls, booties, and a hood. Some suits are made in one piece,
some are made with two or three pieces, and they come in several sizes. Usually you will wear disposable suits made of a white, paper-like material like Tyvek®.

If you are working with chemical strippers, you will need to wear protective suits that are poly-laminated. Poly-laminated suits are usually made of a white or yellow, plastic, paper-like material.

**How to Use Protective Clothing**

By law, your employer must give you clean protective clothing every day. Your employer must do this unless air sampling results show that airborne lead concentrations are below 200 ug/m³. If your exposure to lead is below 200 ug/m³, your employer must give you clean protective clothing at least once a week. Disposable suits must be replaced whenever they tear or rip beyond repair.

**Before you enter the work area:**
1. Take off your street clothes and store them in a clean spot in the change area.
2. Put on your assigned respirator and protective gear.
3. Make sure the disposable suit and booties fit properly. You can shorten a one-piece suit by putting duct tape around the waist, wrists, and ankles.

**Every time you leave the work area:**
1. HEPA vacuum lead dust from your protective clothing.
2. Take off and leave your booties in work area (sometimes in the equipment room of the decontamination area).
3. Take off the rest of your gear in the equipment room of decon.
4. Wash your hands, face, and respirator (hopefully –
shower).

5. Take off your respirator and wash your hands and face again.

6. Dress out in your street clothes in the clean room and exit.

At the end of the day:

1. Throw away disposable coveralls and booties.
2. If you wore booties over your shoes, throw them away with the waste or put them in a bag for your employer to store.
3. Clean your protective gear and respirator. Store it in a clean area.
4. Wash hands and face again – or shower.
5. Shower and wash your hair. If a shower is not available at work, shower as soon as you get home.

**Non-disposable Protective Clothing**

Your employer may give you non-disposable work clothes, such as coveralls. They need to be washed. Do not take your work clothes home or launder them yourself. By law, your employer must have your protective clothing cleaned. You must put your work clothes in a special container located in the dirty part of the change area. This container must be closed and labeled.

**Disposable Protective Clothing**

Disposable suits do not get cleaned. You will throw away your disposable suits and booties in a special container located in the equipment room of the decon. The container must be closed and labeled. Disposable suits need to be changed whenever they rip and tear beyond repair. That usually means several times a day.

**Making Sure You Have the Right Gear**

Ask to see the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for all caustics, strippers, solvents, and chemicals that you use on the job.
Your employer is required by law to provide you with these MSDSs. Look under the section of the MSDSs that is labeled **Special Protection Information.** It is usually around Section 8 of most MSDSs. This section is supposed to tell you what type of gloves, suits, and other protection you need.

**Eye Protection.** Wear eye protection whenever you do abatement work. Wear goggles or a face shield whenever you use caustics or solvents. Make sure you know where the portable eye wash is located.

**Gloves.** When you do lead work, you should wear gloves. If you are working with chemicals like caustics and solvents, read your MSDSs to see what type of gloves you need.

**Footwear.** Tyvek® booties are very slippery, especially on the poly that is put down on the floor of a lead abatement work site. You can use duct tape on the bottom of Tyvek® booties for traction. Or, you might wear canvas or rubber shoes outside the booties. Don't wear booties on ladders or scaffolds. You may wear boots or steel-toed safety shoes. These keep you from slipping or being hurt by falling objects or electrical shocks. You should wear rubber
safety boots if you work around live electrical wires.

If you wear any kind of footwear outside the booties, you must take them off and leave them in the equipment room or area when leaving the work room. You can't take these shoes off the job if they can't be cleaned. (Leather and fabric shoes can't be cleaned; rubber shoes without seams can.) If you can't clean them, you have to throw them out or tie them up in a sealed plastic bag. Rubber shoes can be tied up in a sealed bag and taken from one lead job to another.

Never wear your work shoes home or in your car. They are contaminated with lead. If you wear them home, you will take lead home with you.

**Hard Hats.** Hard hats are made to protect you if something falls straight down on your head. But they will not protect you if something hits you from the side. You should wear a hard hat if there are any overhead hazards; if you are doing demolition work; or if you are working around live electrical wires.

**Ear Plugs.** You will need hearing protection when using a needle gun and other air compressor equipment.

# Safety Equipment Training

Sometimes lead abatement work has many of the same dangers as ordinary demolition work. You will need to use all kinds of safety equipment. OSHA has rules about protective equipment like hard hats, goggles, and boots. Many of the rules for respirators also
apply to other equipment. For example, goggles will not protect you unless they are in perfect shape. They have to be cleaned, stored, and maintained. Your contractor should train you.

**Do Not Take Lead Home.**

It is very important to wear a protective suit and boot covers while working with lead, not your street clothes. Leave your work clothes at work. This includes the shoes you wear at work. If you take them home with you, the lead will come off in your home. This is called **take-home lead.** Your family could be poisoned by the lead you carry home.

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**Dressing Out**

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**Taping Out**
Key Facts for Chapter 4

- **Wear personal protective clothing and equipment.** Anyone working with lead should wear disposable coveralls, gloves, and booties. If you are working with chemical strippers, your protective clothing should be chemical-resistant. Wear goggles while working with lead.

- **According to the OSHA Lead Standard, your employer must have your non-disposable clothing washed for you.**

- **Your employers must replace your disposable work clothes.** Disposable work clothes must be replaced when they rip beyond repair.

- **Follow good hygiene practices.** Store your street clothes in a clean place. Wash your hands and face whenever you leave the work area – especially before you eat or smoke. Remove your protective clothing and shower. Put your street clothes on. Do not bring your work clothes home.

- **Don't take lead home.** Always leave your work clothes on the job. Never wear any work clothes home.