

Helmets on construction sites

*This information
bulletin provides
guidance for
wearing helmets
on construction
sites in
accordance with
the Occupational
Safety and Health
Act 1984 and
Occupational
Safety and Health
Regulations 1996.*

The regulations specify requirements regarding the use of helmets on construction sites. It is the responsibility of the employer or self employed person to carry out a risk assessment and to supply a recommended helmet. The employee has an obligation to wear and correctly use a helmet, as instructed.

When should a helmet be worn?

In accordance with Part 3 of the regulations - Workplace safety requirements, a helmet must be worn at a construction site if there is a risk of being struck on the head.

This includes:

- being struck on the head by a falling object; and
- hitting the head against an object.

Employer responsibilities

Employers have a responsibility under the Act to provide and maintain a safe working environment. Fulfilling this obligation includes abiding by the requirement that it is the responsibility of the employer, the main contractor, a self employed person, a person having control of the workplace or a person having control of access to the workplace to, as far as practicable:

- identify each hazard to which a person at a construction site is likely to be exposed;
- assess the risk of injury or harm to a person resulting from each hazard;
- consider the means by which that risk may be reduced; and
- if that risk may be reduced by personal protective equipment such as a helmet, then provide a helmet complying with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1801.

If the employer, main contractor or self employed person identifies a hazard and assesses that the risk of injury or harm would be reduced by the use of a helmet then they must ensure that:

- the person using the helmet is instructed in relation to the correct fitting, use, selection, testing, maintenance and storage of the helmet;
- the person using the helmet is aware of its limitations;
- the helmet is maintained in good working order; and
- the helmet is replaced when damaged or worn.

WorkSafe

Westcentre, 5th Floor, 1260 Hay Street
West Perth, Western Australia 6005

Telephone: 9327 8777 Infoline: 1300 307 877

Facsimile: 9321 8973 Email: safety@docep.wa.gov.au

Internet: www.docep.wa.gov.au



Department of Consumer
and Employment Protection
Government of Western Australia



It is also a legal requirement that the employer or main contractor ensure each entrance to the workplace is clearly signposted in accordance with Australian Standard AS 1319:

SAFETY HELMET AREA – HELMETS MUST BE WORN AT THIS SITE

Employee responsibilities

Employees have a responsibility under the Act to take reasonable care for their own safety and health and that of others.

Fulfilling this obligation includes:

- wearing a helmet when instructed by their employer or the main contractor;
- not misusing or damaging a helmet; and
- reporting any damage to the person who provides the helmet.

Penalties

There are serious consequences for individuals and organisations resulting from a failure to abide by the law relating to helmets.

Failure to comply with occupational safety and health laws can attract penalties of up to:

- \$25,000 for employees;
- \$250,000 for employers; and
- \$400,000 for organisations.

Further information

The Commission for Occupational Safety and Health's Guidance Note *General Duty of Care in Western Australian Workplaces* provides guidelines for employers, main contractors and self employed people to analyse and assess risks at the workplace and control risks through personal protective equipment such as helmets.

A free downloadable copy is available from www.worksafe.wa.gov.au.

Alternatively, copies are available directly from WorkSafe (small fee applies):

West Centre
Level 5, 1260 Hay St
West Perth 6005
Freecall 1300 307 877

This bulletin has been prepared in collaboration with the Commission for Occupational Safety and Health's Construction Industry Safety Advisory Committee.

Regional offices:

Bunbury (08) 9722 2888
Karratha (08) 9185 0900

TTY: (08) 9327 8838

This bulletin is available on request in other formats to assist people with special needs.