

# General Industry Protective Equipment Fact Sheet

## PPE – Foot Protection, 29 CFR 1910.136

**1910.136(a)** *“The employer shall ensure that each affected employee uses protective footwear when working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects, or objects piercing the sole, or when the use of protective footwear will protect the affected employee from an electrical hazard, such as a static-discharge or electric-shock hazard, that remains after the employer takes other necessary protective measures.”*

**Employer Compliance** – Employers must comply with one of the consensus standards OSHA incorporated by reference in 1910.136. **(1)** ASTM F-2412-2005, “Standard Test Methods for Foot Protection” and ASTM F-2413-2005 “Standard Specification for Performance Requirements for Protective Footwear”. **(2)** ANSI Z41-1999, "American National Standard for Personal Protection - Protective Footwear". Or **(3)** ANSI Z41-1991, "American National Standard for Personal Protection -- Protective Footwear”.

**What’s Required** – Employees who face potential for foot or leg injuries while performing work should wear protective footwear. This takes into account exposure to hot substances, corrosive, or poisonous materials. Employers must determine through a hazard assessment if and what type of safety shoes are required. However, employers are not required to pay for ordinary safety shoes that can be worn offsite.

### Types of Foot Protection:

**Leggings** protect the shins and feet from heat hazards such as welding sparks.

**Metatarsal guards** protect the instep area from impact and compression. Made of aluminum, steel, fiber or plastic, these guards are strapped to the outside of the shoes.

**Toe guards** fit over the toes of regular shoes to protect the toes from impact and compression hazards. These can be made of steel, aluminum or plastic.

**Safety shoes** can have impact-resistant toes and heat-resistant soles. Metal insoles in some safety shoes protect against puncture. They also can be coated for oil and/or chemical resistance.

**Special Purpose Shoes** such as electrically conductive shoes provide protection against the buildup of static electricity.

**Care of Protective Footwear** – As with all protective equipment, safety footwear should be inspected prior to each use. Check for wear and tear at reasonable intervals. This includes checking for cracks, separation of materials, broken buckles or laces. The soles should be checked for pieces of metal or other embedded items that could present electrical or tripping hazards. Also, employees need to follow manufacturers’ recommendations for cleaning and maintenance.