SAFETY EQUIPMENT Works for You

Send Us Your 'Safety Equipment Works for You' Stories

Protection Update welcomes contributions from readers for our regular "Safety Equipment Works for You" feature. Email examples of where PPE has saved workers' lives or prevented injuries to Editor Joe Walker, jwalker@safetyequipment.org, or mail them to the Editor, Protection Update, International Safety Equipment Association, 1901 N. Moore Street, Suite 808, Arlington, VA 22209. Photos are encouraged.

Hard Hat Saves Construction Worker during Oklahoma Twister

"I would like to thank you…for saving my life… I was subject to the tornado that hit Moore, Oklahoma (May 20-21, 2013). I faced the twister inside my truck, trapped inside a large metal RV storage. As the [building's] walls disappeared around me, my truck was pelted with 250-mile-per-hour debris and both front and rear passenger windows blew into the truck.

"I was covered with glass, and that's when I grabbed my hard hat. I rolled up into a six-foot-four-inch, 215-pound ball behind the steering wheel and prayed… I was in the middle of a two-mile-wide monster. Your hard hat is all that shielded me… If I had not grabbed my hard hat I'd be dead, no doubt about it… There were tree limbs that looked like spear-heads that shot off my head. Your product works. I lived to tell about it. Keep up the good work and thanks again."
— Drew Jackson, Metroplex Construction

Drew Jackson's Omega Full Brim, high-visibility, lime-green hard hat by ISEA member ERB: Safety Products for Life (www.e-erb.com). *(Editor's note: More 350 people were injured and 24 lost their lives in the Moore, Okla., tornados, which caused widespread devastation in the Oklahoma City suburb.)*

Wildland Helmet Protects Firefighter from Serious Head Injury

An Arizona firefighter might have lost his head and life had he not been wearing a proper helmet when a tree being cut down by a fellow firefighter toppled onto him. The wildland firefighter sustained an arm broken in 16 places, a crushed radial artery and broken femur. Fortunately, his head and neck were protected, and he is expected to make a full recovery.

Wildland® FH911HR helmet by ISEA member Bullard (www.bullard.com). The company inducted the firefighter into its "Turtle Club," which since 1946 has recognized workers who have escaped serious injury by wearing head protection.

BETTER EYEWASH STATIONS

from page 50

emergency: the sink. It saves money, because the unit does not have to be individually plumbed in. It saves space along the walls where a freestanding station would mount, and on the floor where space must be left for the eye injury victim to stand. It also makes it quick and easy to test, because the sink catches the water.

However, add-on devices pose safety challenges in actual installations. Because they are dependent on the operation of the faucet's hot and cold valves, there is always the potential that an injured person could activate the hot instead of the cold, presenting a scalding danger.

Dedicated Combination Units

A newer improvement over add-on devices is represented by the dedicated dual-function faucet/eyewash unit, such as the Speakman SEF 1850 Eyesaver series. These are standard laboratory faucets with built-in, independently operating eyewash stations. They use a standard plumbing supply, but eyewash function is controlled without use of the faucet valves. Eyewash function is activated by a single pull on a dedicated, well-marked lever. They comply fully with the ANSI standard, and are made in a variety of configurations for different sink types.

A key benefit of the dual-function approach is the independent water supply to the eyewash function, so there is never a danger of hot water being delivered for eye-flushing. From a design perspective, combination units have all the virtues of faucet-mount add-ons: they take no additional space, require no additional location to be plumbed, and have the benefit of a sink to catch water in testing and in use.

From a safety perspective, they resolve the negative issues of faucet mounts, because they are functionally equivalent to a dedicated eyewash station. They may actually improve overall safety versus a free-standing station by avoiding the creation of slippery floors around the station when the eyewash is in use. The newest dual-function units also offer aesthetic improvements over more traditional lab-style faucets, providing a look that may be more compatible with contemporary design.