The Importance of High Visibility Clothing

Collisions with motor vehicles and construction equipment take lives regularly on construction sites. Wearing high visibility (hi-vis) clothing is an easy, effective way to protect yourself and reduce exposure to these risks.

Low-light situations—such as early morning and evening work—make hi-vis clothing even more critical. Always wear high visibility clothing when working near traffic to ensure you remain visible to equipment operators and drivers.

Choosing the Right High Visibility Gear

There are many forms of high visibility clothing, including:

- T-shirts
- Sweatshirts
- Suspenders
- Vests *(the most common option)*

Hi-vis safety vests come in every color of the rainbow, but wearing the right color matters:

- **Neon yellow** is often recommended for urban work.
- **Bright orange** is recommended for road work and rural areas.
- **Reflective elements** are essential for night work or low-light conditions.

Dark clothing with only reflectors may not be visible in daylight, and bright clothing without reflectors is harder to see at night. Always ensure your hi-vis clothing includes both bright colors and reflective materials.

ANSI Standards for High Visibility Clothing

Performance Classes

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) sets the national consensus standards for hi-vis clothing. Clothing is categorized into the following performance classes:

- **Roadway (R)**: Best for roadwork.
- **Off-Road (O)**: Better for off-road applications.
- **Public Safety (P)**: Used mainly by police and EMS personnel.

Protection Levels

Additionally, ANSI classifies high visibility clothing into three protection levels based on the size and amount of reflective materials:

- **Class 1 (Lowest Protection)** – Suitable for warehouse work or low-traffic outdoor work.
- **Class 2 (Moderate Protection)** – Includes more bright and reflective materials, covering a larger area of the body.
- **Class 3 (Highest Protection)** – Provides the most coverage and reflective materials, designed for high-traffic, low-light environments.

Class 2 or higher is required on most construction sites.
Class 3 is mandatory for work near roadways.



Class 1



Class 3

Discussion Topics

1. What class of high visibility clothing is best for work near roadways?

2. How does high visibility clothing help protect us?

3. In what areas is lime green recommended? Bright orange?

Name	Signature

Date: _____