

99-08: Protective Footwear



Pacific Maritime Association

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SAFETY BULLETIN 99-8

Protective Footwear

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INFORMATION

OSHA Regulations require that: Employers shall ensure that Protective Footwear meeting the American National Standard Institute Standard Z-41 is worn any time an employee is working in areas where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects or objects piercing the sole.

The PCMSC Rule 650 requires that "appropriate" footwear be worn to protect against falling, crushing, or penetrating actions. Where there is a danger of injuries due to falling or rolling objects or objects piercing the sole, the "appropriate" footwear is the ANSI Z-41 protective footwear per the OSHA regulations.

Recently, employers have received a number of citations from OSHA under 29 CFR 1917.94 or 29 CFR 1918.104 for failing to ensure that protective footwear was worn. These citations have occurred while handling break bulk or palletized cargo, manually handling containers, and during log operations where there was significant danger of a crushing foot injury. In a number of these cases, the employee was wearing tennis shoes, which were easily visible to the OSHA inspector (and to the immediate supervisor.) OSHA has advised several employers that inspection for protective footwear will be a priority during their visits.

PMA recorded 118-foot injuries and another 114 ankle injuries in 1998. There have been 60-foot injuries and 56 ankle injuries so far in 1999. Protective footwear would have reduced these totals. PMA encourages the wearing of protective footwear, and has a payroll deduction program in effect for the purchase of footwear with selected vendors. These shoe vendors are available to come to the terminals and the union halls. In addition, department stores like Sears, J.C. Penny, Target, K-Mart and Wal-Mart all sell various brands of protective footwear that meet the ANSI Z-41 requirements.

ACTION

All employers are reminded of their responsibility to ensure employees wear protective footwear where there is a danger of foot injuries due to falling or rolling objects or objects piercing the sole.