



PPE

Milwaukee Type II Helmets Resist Top and Side Impacts

Matt Morgan | Apr 06, 2023

Hard hats have been protecting workers on the job for a century. Though the equipment *protects against falling objects*, the traditional design focuses on the top of the head, leaving workers exposed to some potential hazards in today's manufacturing facilities.

Zach Richman and his team at *Milwaukee Tool* have heard too many stories of workers wearing traditional hard hats and suffering injuries to the side of the head, a vulnerable spot that isn't covered.

"Not much has changed from an innovation standpoint of hard hats for the past 100 years," says Richman, director of product marketing for personal protective equipment at Milwaukee Tool. "We realized we need a greater degree of protection, especially as slips, trips and falls are a top-10 leading cause of injuries today."

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Zach Richman
Milwaukee Tool

Milwaukee's solution to this age-old problem is a line of *climbing-style safety helmets* that offers superior protection, high functionality and added comfort. Manufacturers wanting to offer more versatile head protection for their employees would do well to consider the advantages of safety helmets over traditional hard hats.

Superior Head Protection

Head protection must comply with standards set by the American National Standards Institute (*ANSI/ISEA Z89.1*). Milwaukee Tool, which has a 99-year history of delivering quality solutions to the construction and manufacturing trades, strives to go above and beyond the standards.

“We’re testing to ANSI, but we’re also looking at how to have better protection across the board,” Richman says. “We complement that with our shell material, our foam on the inside of our helmet, our accessories for eye, face and hearing protection. We’re making sure that we’re looking at all the hazards that any end user might face on a daily basis, whether it’s people on a ladder up 6 feet or people on the ground where there are wires and trip hazards.

“We want to make sure that our products are tested and ANSI-approved as well as third-party tested and certified,” he continues.

For example, *Milwaukee’s Type II safety helmets* also meet *Europe’s EN 12492* energy absorption capacity clauses for front, side and rear and retention system clauses for strength and effectiveness.

Milwaukee’s safety helmets are also tested and certified by Underwriters Laboratories, an independent safety organization.

“At our facility in Mukwonago, Wisconsin, where we produce our hats and helmets, we get audited quarterly by a third party to make sure everything is up to standards,” Richman adds. “And then we are taking product off the line to make sure we’re testing to all different standards. We’ve never had a failure.”



The Milwaukee BOLT™ System allows workers to secure a number of accessories to their safety helmets at once, including earmuffs, eye visors and headlamps. (Photo courtesy of Milwaukee Tool)

High Functionality of Helmets

Traditionally, hard hats have made it difficult for workers to equip themselves with tools they need for the job. For example, protective eyewear or ear protection—or both—might not fit correctly when used with many types of hard hats.

If workers wanted to wear multiple pieces of protective equipment or other accessories along with their hard hat, they were left to improvise. Richman has seen workers zip-tie, duct-tape and otherwise modify their hard hats for better functionality and productivity, which is problematic.

“Any modification to a user’s head protection puts the item’s integrity at risk,” Richman explains. “Zip ties and duct tape may become loose over time and can cause distractions while being worn. If the zip tie or duct tape is unable to secure an accessory to a hard hat or helmet, the user may be more likely to remove the head protection to adjust the zip tie or duct tape, which could expose them to a potential hazard.”

Milwaukee’s solution is an ingenious connection system called BOLT™, which allows workers to secure a number of accessories simultaneously and quickly swap them out when the job changes. Four BOLT™ accessory slots and two universal accessory slots are available on Milwaukee’s hard hats and safety helmets to attach *earmuffs*, eye visors, face shields, marker clips, headlamps, and *sunshades* and *sun visors* for outdoor work.

WATCH: Workers share why they like Milwaukee’s ANSI Type II safety helmets for better protection and more comfort:

Besides personalization of accessories, Milwaukee’s *safety helmets can be customized* with a company’s logo, which gives workers a sense of pride and makes them more likely to wear the head protection.

Using the *visualizer feature on Milwaukee’s website*, companies can see what their logo will look like on the hard hat or helmet as a 3D rendering.

“Our portal simplifies the ordering process for a business to upload their logo, add additional stock images if needed, and adjust the size, color and position of their logo to generate a proof instantaneously,” Richman says. “The user minimizes downtime waiting on a proof and getting the item into production in our U.S. facility, which represents cost savings to the user.”

Discover Milwaukee’s newest PPE: head protection, vests, glasses, respirators, gloves and kneepads

Added Comfort

Like any personal protective equipment, head protection must be comfortable if workers are going to wear it.

Milwaukee’s safety helmets feature a comfortable padded suspension that includes an adjustable swinging ratchet for better comfort, plus a chin strap with five adjustable buckles that provide a secure, yet comfortable fit. The chin strap, along with the antimicrobial sweatband and helmet liner, are removable and machine washable.

Some helmets on the market today sacrifice comfort for safety, unfortunately, Richman says. “With our safety helmets, you don’t need to make that trade-off,” he says, “as they provide a high level of both safety and comfort.”

What accessories would you attach if you had six slots on your safety helmet? Tell us in the comments below.

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