

September 17, 2008

DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 08-18

TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
 ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
 ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ESTHER R. JOHNSON, Ed.D.
 National Director
 Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Preventing Arc Eye and Other Welding Injuries

1. Purpose. To inform Job Corps centers about injuries related to welding operations and the requirements for selection of proper personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent injuries.
2. Background. Between July 2004 and August 2008, Job Corps centers reported 29 welding injuries to students. The more serious injuries resulted in temporary medical separations to allow students to recover from their injuries before continuing their training. The injuries reported include:

- a. eye injuries such as arc eye or welder's flash and foreign bodies flying into the eye;
- b. burns to the face, hands, arms, legs, and back;
- c. fractures and lacerations to the hand; and
- d. fractures due to objects falling onto legs and arms.

Accident investigations revealed that ill-fitting, unused, or improperly used PPE; poor housekeeping; unsafe work practices; and inadequate training were the root causes of the reported injuries.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Magazine article "Need a Reason for Selecting Appropriate Welding PPE?" (September 2006), the following items are required PPE for individuals engaged in welding and/or cutting activities:

- a. A combination of a welding helmet and goggles that have appropriate filter shade

for the operation being performed. A list of the required filtering shades for specific welding and cutting operations is provided in 29 CFR 1910.252. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z87.1-2003 also provides recommendations for protective eyewear. Welding helmets and other protective eyewear are now available in auto-darkening or automatic light-sensing filtering shades that darken at the first sign of ultraviolet (UV) or infrared (IR) rays.

- b. Flame-resistant clothing in an assortment of fabric weights depending upon the environmental conditions in which they will be used. Clothing options include shirts, coveralls, pants, capes, sleeves, jackets, aprons, and shoe covers. Leather coveralls, capes, sleeves, jackets, aprons, and shoe covers are the most durable. Clothing free of pockets, fabric-covered zippers and/or snaps, and dark colors provide maximum protection against catching sparks; avoiding flash, sparks, or arcs; and reducing reflection under face shields.
- c. Flame-resistant hand protection, including all-leather welding gloves with the appropriate lining to protect against hazards associated with specific types of welding or cutting operations. Hand wear, according to ANSI Z491-88, shall provide adequate coverage and insulation to minimize skin burns caused by sparks, spatter, and radiation.

3. Action. Job Corps center operators, Center Directors, safety officers, and welding trade instructors shall take the following action:

- a. Job Corps center safety officers and welding trade instructors shall review PPE provided to students in the welding trade to ensure that it complies with 29 CFR 1910.252(b).
- b. Safety officers are encouraged to review the OSHA Publication 3151-12R 2003, Personal Protective Equipment (see attachment), to ensure that PPE selected for use on center is appropriate for the activity and provides the required level of protection.
- c. All welding-related injuries shall be investigated by the safety officer. Supplemental Significant Incident Reports (SIRs) shall include the investigation results and corrective actions implemented to prevent future occurrences.
- d. Safety officers shall monitor welding activities on center, including career technical training projects, and work-based learning sites to ensure that proper workplace safety requirements are followed. Centers are strongly encouraged to suspend welding or other training activities when hazardous conditions are observed or identified until those conditions are abated.

Addressees are to ensure that this Information Notice is distributed to all appropriate staff.

4. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

5. Inquiries. Direct all inquiries to Marsha Fitzhugh at (202) 693-3099 or fitzhugh.marsha@dol.gov, Kelley Clark at (202) 693-3089 or clark.kelley@dol.gov, or Heather Edmonds at (202) 693-3774 or edmonds.heather@dol.gov

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Attachment

OSHA Publication 3151-12R 2003, Personal Protective Equipment