

HEAD TO TOE SAFETY

SUMMER FOOTWEAR

It's no surprise that many people like to wear summer shoes such as Crocs and sandals in the workplace for cool comfort. But healthcare and research settings pose very different hazards than the beach, the garden, or the supermarket. When choosing the right footwear for work, consider your environment and the circumstances that surround you at work. Healthcare and research settings, such as hospitals and labs, present many potential risks to unprotected feet. Support and protection are the most important considerations when choosing workplace footwear.



Support

By design, many casual shoes are designed with no back or minimal straps in order to easily slip them on and off. This often does not provide sufficient ankle support, particularly considering that some healthcare workers routinely need to lift and move patients, equipment and materials. Many of us need to traverse our very hilly Marquam Hill Campus and sometimes awkward sidewalks and pathways. Long shifts are required of us and arch support needs to be adequate for those long periods of working on our feet to support good posture.

Protection

One of the most noticeable elements of summer shoes, especially Crocs, is the ventilation. Ventilation holes throughout the classic Croc, strappy sandals, and open-toed wedges may keep your feet cooler than closed shoes. However, it's easy to see how this could be a hazard, especially in healthcare and research areas. Shoes that do not fully cover your feet do not protect against chemical or biological exposures, needle sticks, dropped objects, and spills. The open-ended heels of slip-on shoes also leave your feet susceptible to injury from wheelchairs or other equipment.

Solutions

If you like the fit of Crocs, or similar shoes, many companies versions that are much more suitable for environments we encounter at OHSU.

Wearing casual summer shoes in many work areas at OHSU presents significant risks. Make smart choices for comfort, support and your own style. Keep in mind the dress code policies for your area. In general, closed-toe, low heeled shoes with slip-resistant soles are the most appropriate shoes to wear to work at OHSU.

Check OHSU Employee Discounts for great deals on proper footwear:

[http://
ozone.ohsu.edu/hr/
resources/discounts/
products.shtml](http://ozone.ohsu.edu/hr/resources/discounts/products.shtml)



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Topic of the Month:

EYE AND FACE PROTECTION

Eye and face protection is included in **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** guidelines. Safety glasses,



face shields, and masks are all examples of PPE. It is important to wear PPE every time that a blood, body fluid, chemical or radiation exposure is possible, and not just when expected. This is a conservative ap-

proach, but you never know when an accidental exposure will occur.

Nearly three out of every five eye injury victims were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident. To prevent eye injuries, all people who may be in eye hazard areas must wear protective eyewear. This includes employees, patients, visitors, researchers, and contractors.

The basics of eye and face protection:

- Chemical goggles and face shields are used when there is a hazard from chemical splash.
- Face shields are only to be worn over primary eye protection (safety glasses or goggles).
- Side protectors or ANSI-approved safety glasses are required when flying object hazards are present.
- Contact lenses are **not** adequate eye protection, and may result in additional irritation when worn in contaminated atmospheres.
- For employees who wear prescription eyeglasses, eye protectors should either incorporate the prescription in the design

or fit properly over glasses.

- Use appropriate filter lenses to protect against light radiation such as lasers. Tinted/shaded lenses are only filter lenses if they are identified as such.

In addition to knowing what PPE to use, employees must understand how and when to properly use it.

Employees injured while not wearing protective eyewear most often did not believe it was required by the situation. OHSU provides eye protection at no cost to employees, and training is available appropriate for selection and use of eyewear.

The biggest complaints against wearing PPE are comfort and fit. Because of this, eye and face protection is available in a variety of sizes and styles.

PPE is most effective when it fits properly, and training employees on how to wear it can increase the protective value of PPE.

Every piece of PPE has limitations on effectively preventing exposures. In the case of eye protection, it is still possible for liquids, aerosols, and gases to pass around the edges of the protective equipment. Employees must understand these limitations.

Safety glasses and goggles are available online through Logistics, and may be ordered through Research Stores.

You'll find Logistics' online catalogue at:

<http://pdxlogwebsvr.ohsu.edu/webcat2/Catalog.aspx?CatalogID=1>

PPE is also available through Research Stores:

<http://logicprod/researchstores/>



Energy Conservation

High temperatures in the Northwest and resulting energy concerns have employees asking, "What can we do to help?" The following list provides practical energy conservation ideas for your area:

- Turn off unnecessary or excessive lighting in buildings and work areas and allow windows to provide light when possible. Offices often have more lights than necessary, and using only a portion of the lighting provides adequate illumination for work.



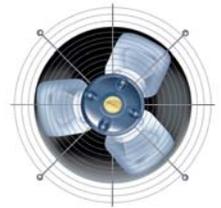
Facilities & Real Estate (F&RE) may be able to modify fixtures in areas that are not independently controlled.

- Adjust computers and monitors to sleep during periods of inactivity, and turn them off completely when long periods are expected, such as overnight, on weekends or while you're on vacation.



- Turn off switched corridor lights when entire areas are vacant.

- Keep doors and windows shut to allow the air conditioning systems to work more efficiently. Problems with airflow and temperature should be solved through heating and ventilation systems adjustments. Contact F&RE at 6-0000 for assistance or submit a request online.
- Make sure office lights and unnecessary equipment are turned off overnight and on weekends. Assign this task to the last person out in the evening or to housekeepers.



Reminder: Verify restrooms are vacant before turning off the lights!

For a current issue of SafetyNews online, and for archives, visit:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safetynews.cfm>

The SafetyTeam page is available at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safetyteam.cfm>

These pages are updated regularly. If there are OHSU resources you'd like to see linked, please send suggestions to the SafetyTeam Coordinator at:

safeteam@ohsu.edu

SAFETYTEAM MEMBERSHIP

Do you know someone who'd like to get involved?

If so, contact us at safeteam@ohsu.com or 4-7795.

Questions? Ask Environmental Health & Radiation Safety:

503-494-7795

