



High Visibility Clothing

Construction sites are busy and even hectic most of the time. Sometimes accidents may occur simply because someone is not seen. While it may seem obvious, making sure that others can see you is extremely important for overall safety on a job site. One way to make sure that you are as safe as possible is by wearing high-visibility, or high-vis, clothing.

Different Types of High-vis Garments

There are different kinds of high-visibility clothing that may meet the ANSI/ISEA standard. For every high-vis garment, there are two components to be mindful of: a background fabric color and reflective tape. The background fabric can come in a variety of bright colors. The reflective tape is intended to help others distinguish you as a person and not another brightly colored control device, such as a traffic cone. High-vis clothing classes:

Class 1—This type of high-vis garment does not meet ANSI/ISEA standards for providing ample safety during work that requires high-vis clothing. Class 1 garments are typically smaller vests that do not provide a lot of material. These garments might be appropriate for work done on sidewalks or as a parking lot attendant.

Class 2—These garments will meet minimum standards for federal agencies. They are larger than Class 1 clothing and are made with more background material and more reflective tape. Examples of situations in which Class 2 garments are generally suitable include work during the daytime, on roads with lower speed limits and in areas where a physical barrier exists between traffic and workers.

Class 3—This type of high-vis clothing provides the highest level of visibility for the wearer. These garments are either full-length pants or have long-sleeves to provide the most background and reflective material. Class 3 gear should be worn for duties such as working at night, in areas without a barrier protecting workers, or on high-speed roadways.

Taking Care of High-vis Clothing

The brightness, reflectivity and overall condition of high-vis clothing can be the difference between staying safe and having a serious accident. Accordingly, it is important that the gear being used by workers is in good condition. There are no guarantees on how long high-vis clothing will last, but according to the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA), apparel worn on a daily basis can generally be trusted for six months. A garment that is occasionally used can have a service life of up to three years. Because of the potential for those estimates to vary, it is important that workers regularly evaluate their high-vis clothing and treat it with care.



Things to Keep in Mind

In addition to the class and condition of high-vis clothing, there are other things that must be taken into consideration in order to ensure worker safety. When using high-vis garments, consider the following:

- Make sure garments not only provide high visibility, but also fit properly, as loose-fitting or baggy clothing is a hazard in itself.
- Do not cover up your high-vis clothing with a jacket or sweatshirt that is not high-vis.
- Keep high-vis clothing as clean as possible.
- Do not wear worn, damaged or excessively dirty clothing.
- When possible, consider environmental conditions and select clothing that you will be comfortable in.

SAFETY REMINDER

Employees should be provided with high-vis clothing when exposed to vehicular traffic, heavy equipment, or low light/visibility conditions.