



# SafetyTalk

## Head protection



*In January 2011, a 70-lb metal beam fell from the seventh storey of a condominium development and struck a worker on the head, face, and torso. The man was taken to hospital in serious condition but survived. Police credited his hard hat with saving his life.*

### Explain dangers

A hard hat can protect you from cuts, scrapes, and bruises. It can protect you from falling objects, which can cause severe damage to the head and spine. It can prevent electric shock and limit your exposure to UV radiation from the sun.

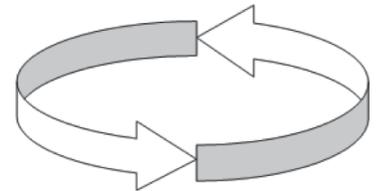
### Identify controls

Keep these points in mind to ensure you get the best use out of your hard hat.

- Hard hats that are poorly maintained or improperly used can fail. It's important to follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use the correct type of hard hat for the job. Hard hats should be labelled with the CSA or ANSI **Type** and **Class** of protection.
- Approved hard hats protect against impact and penetration. **Type I** hard hats protect only the top of the head; **Type II** hard hats protect both the top and the sides of the head.
- A **Class E** hard hat is required for construction and utility projects. It provides electrical protection up to 20,000 volts.
- Inspect your hard hat every day before you use it.
- Clean your hard hat with soap or cleaning agents as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Never wear a baseball cap under your hard hat.

- A hard hat should normally be worn facing forward. It may be worn backwards only if it has a reverse orientation mark

#### Reverse orientation mark



- Never paint a hard hat.
- Never make holes in a hard hat.
- Never store your hard hat in the rear window of your car—intense sunlight can make it age more quickly.
- Never spray your hard hat with insect repellent—it can damage the material.
- Hard hats are not made to last forever. Find out the useful life of your hard hat by contacting the manufacturer or reading the manufacturer's instructions.

### Demonstrate

Together as a crew, inspect your hard hats.

Check the shell for cracks, dents, deep cuts, or gouges. If the surface appears dull or chalky rather than shiny, the hard hat may have become brittle.

Check the suspension for cracks or tears. Make sure the straps are not twisted, cut, or frayed.

If you find any signs of damage or degradation, remove the hard hat from service immediately.