

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE REGARDING FACE COVERINGS

In the construction industry the priority is always safety. Therefore, the goals of the Dayton Builders Exchange parallel the goals of Governor DeWine in keeping our Member Firms' Employees and their Families safe. We support the way Governor DeWine has handled fighting this pandemic, and we support the use of face covering in general. The only exceptions we will be taking concerning the use of face covering on construction jobsites is listed below as long as that use does not increase the hazards to which the construction workers are exposed. The construction industry has many safety concerns. Hazards in construction frequently change from site to site. The safety professionals of this association have concluded that the seriousness for some hazards may be increased (sometimes significantly) by requiring the use by employees of face coverings. As a result, we have concluded that it is not always industry best practice to require the use of face coverings without consideration for other hazards and the impact of face coverings on them. As a result the Dayton Builders Exchange has adopted construction industry best practices for the use of face coverings on construction job sites,

Because the conditions on construction sites may vary we have determined it is industry best practice in construction for each contractor to evaluate the safety of employees who may be required to wear a face covering and to decide on a job to job basis (even a day to day basis) whether the wearing of a face covering will increase employees' exposure to or create a greater hazard(s) on the site. We have determined that it is construction industry best practice to adopt the following:

Face coverings will be required in the construction industry unless the employer determines that because of site and/or environmental conditions the use of face coverings in construction is not industry best practice and in fact, poses a health and safety hazard to construction workers or increases hazards which they already face. Such a determination may be made for the following instances:

1. Face coverings may interfere with wearer's ability to fully see the entire work area in which he/she is engaged in work. Full perspective is essential for all construction workers to enable them to identify and avoid and/or guard against hazards which may arise in or enter their work area.
2. Face coverings (depending on the types which may be available) may interfere with or inhibit the ability of the worker to breathe freely, which could lead to cognitive impairment to the wearer leading to unsafe actions.
3. While performing construction work on high heat index days, face coverings can and will increase the heat load experienced by the wearer, depending on his/her specific

work environment, exposing the wearer to an increased likelihood of developing heat related illnesses up to and including heat stroke, which may be fatal. Such a situation is unacceptable to the construction industry.

4. As part of an effective heat illness prevention program, workers are expected to hydrate every 15-20 minutes. If workers are wearing face coverings, they will have to touch their faces frequently throughout the shift to remove their face coverings and consume water. This would serve to increase the risk of contamination/viral transmission via hand to face contact.
5. It is important to allow quick and responsive communication on a construction site, because of its complexities. Face coverings, which may be worn in addition to other safety PPE may, depending on the type of face covering used, interfere with the ability of site workers to rapidly and clearly communicate essential project and safety information to each other.

For the preceding reasons the Dayton Builders Exchange concluded that it is not industry best practice to mandate and/or require employees to wear face coverings at all times they are on a construction site, but to encourage the use wherever it is safe to do so.