

# Work **Safe!** Bulletin

## INDUSTRIAL PROTECTIVE HEADWEAR

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A worker escaped life-threatening injury when a scaffold plank fell 45 feet before striking the worker on the head. The worker was wearing a CSA certified hardhat and only suffered minor injuries.

### **THE HARD HAT PROBABLY SAVED THE WORKER'S LIFE!**

The wearing of safety headwear is a very effective method of reducing the risk of serious and disabling head injuries. These injuries may result from objects falling from above, but can also occur from side, front and rear impact. In addition, head injuries can result from workers contacting stationary objects, such as overhead pipes and protruding equipment. Safety headwear may prevent injuries such as skull fractures, contusions, concussions, burns and electrical trauma.



Manitoba regulations require a worker to wear approved safety headwear on all project sites, unless the worker is not exposed to the danger of an injury to the head, and the worker has safety headwear immediately available for use. Approved safety headwear is headwear labeled as conforming to the CSA or ANSI safety headwear standards. Safety headwear is recommended for use in any workplaces where there is a risk of head injury from the impact of objects and equipment as a result of the work processes.

Safety headwear conforming to CSA standard Z94.1-92 "Industrial Protective Headwear," offers an improved degree of protection to workers.

Headwear meeting this design criteria provides protection against side (lateral) impact and has an improved retention system. Studies have shown that a significant percentage of blows to the head are to areas other than the crown or top of the head. In addition, research indicates that a significant number of injuries were occurring to workers that wore hard hats, but due to slips and falls, the headwear fell off and a head injury resulted. For these reasons, the CSA standard was modified to accommodate improvements in the design.

"Bump Caps" are not considered approved safety headwear, and are not certified as such. This headwear will not protect a worker from a significant blow to the head. The bump cap should only be considered in a workplace where there is minimal risk of injury as a result of contact with stationary objects.

### **CARE AND USE OF SAFETY HEADWEAR**

(Also refer to Appendix A of CSA standard Z94.1-92 "Industrial Protective Headwear")

- ◆ Inspect the shell and suspension for any visible damage before each use. Make sure the suspension harness is properly secured to the shell.
- ◆ Ensure the headwear is properly adjusted, secured directly to the head and worn in the proper orientation. (Baseball caps, etc. should not be worn under a hardhat)
- ◆ Do not paint or otherwise modify the shell or suspension of the headwear.
- ◆ Accessories should not be attached to the headwear unless approved by the manufacturer.
- ◆ Safety headwear that has received a severe blow should be removed from service and destroyed.