



**OREGON/WASHINGTON  
U.S. FOREST SERVICE  
&  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
TECHNICAL SAFETY GUIDE**



**Hardhat Serviceability Inspections**

- ❖ Head protection must be worn when employees perform tasks, or work in environments where they are exposed to potential head injuries from falling objects. (Ref: 29 CFR 1910.135)
- ❖ Employees required to wear hardhats must conduct serviceability inspections prior to initial issue of a hardhat and frequent serviceability inspections thereafter, at least monthly, to ensure the hardhat provides the protection it was initially designed to provide.
- ❖ **THE VISUAL SERVICEABILITY INSPECTION:**
  - ❑ Industrial hardhats, not used in wildland firefighting, will contain a label affixed to the interior shell that indicates the hardhat meets, at a minimum, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z89.1 Type I or Type II, Class C, E, or G, depending on the work being performed by the employee. Do not remove this label.
  - ❑ **Wildland Firefighting Hardhats/Helmets** used on the fireline must meet the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1977, Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting. A label on the inside of the helmet should clearly state the helmet is compliant with NFPA 1977. These helmets must also meet, at a minimum, ANSI Z89.1 Type I, Class G. A label must be present indicating this information. Do not remove this label.
  - ❑ Shells may not be made of metal and cannot have metal parts or clips.
  - ❑ The use of decals, stickers, or labels must be limited so that cracks may be spotted more readily.
  - ❑ Shells that have become stiff, brittle, faded, dull, flake, exhibit a chalky appearance or begin to delaminate must be replaced.
  - ❑ Hardhats must be replaced if they have sustained any physical damage that would potentially reduce the protective strength of the hardhat. Any dents, holes, penetrations, or cracks will immediately render a hardhat unserviceable. Deep gouges, nicks, scrapes, or abrasions will also render a hardhat unserviceable.
  - ❑ **Suspension:** The main purpose of the suspension system is to help absorb the shock of an impact so its important this system is kept in good condition at all times. Suspensions must be inspected closely for cracks, frayed or cut crown straps, torn headband, or size adjustment slots and loss of pliability.
- ❖ **THE PHYSICAL SERVICEABILITY INSPECTION:**
  - ❖ Compress the shell inward from the sides about 1inch with both hands and then release the pressure. The shell should return to its original shape quickly, exhibiting elasticity. If the shell does not quickly return to its original shape, or IF it cracks, it must be replaced immediately.



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**Hardhat Maintenance  
&  
General Information**

- ❖ **Maintenance:** Hardhat service life can be extended by cleaning both the shell and the suspension.
  - Scrub the shell and suspension system with a mild detergent to remove dirt and stains.
  - Rinse thoroughly with clean, warm water, not to exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - After rinsing, wipe dry and once again carefully inspect for any signs of damage.
  
- ❖ To extend the life of your hardhat:
  - Never store in direct sunlight or carry in a vehicle where it may be exposed to direct sunlight
  - Never carry items inside your hardhat
  - Do not sit on your hardhat
  
- ❖ Most hardhats contain ultraviolet inhibitors to reduce susceptibility to ultraviolet damage related to light exposure, temperature extremes, and chemical degradation.
  
- ❖ As a general recommendation, hardhats should be replaced every 2 to 5 years, a decision that should be based on the results of field serviceability inspections. Hardhats exposed to sunlight, heat, cold, or chemicals are at risk of deteriorating more rapidly. Replacement of these hardhats might be necessary at increased intervals, a decision that must be determined based on the results of serviceability inspections.
  
- ❖ When the hardhat is placed into service, the date will be annotated on the inside of the hardhat using a permanent marker. The serviceability life of a hardhat begins when the hardhat is placed into service and not when it was manufactured. Perform a pre-use serviceability inspection using the criteria outlined on the previous page.
  
- ❖ Whenever possible, hardhat storage areas should be in climate controlled environments protected from direct sunlight, extreme temperatures, or chemical exposure.



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**Hardhat Serviceability Inspections  
What to look for:**

**Poorly maintained**



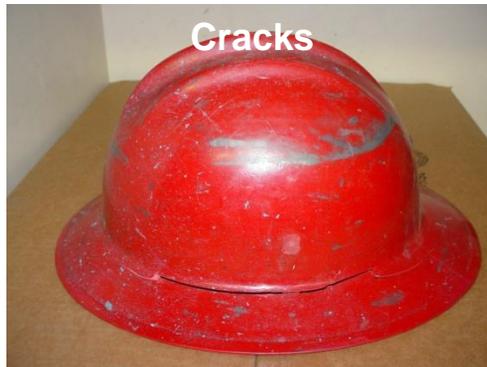
**Scuffs, abrasions, and cuts**



**Unsecured label**



**Suspension system removed**



**Cracks**

**Cracked and faded**



**Suspension system not pliable, dried and worn**



**With exception of face and neck shrouds, as shown here, inserting materials between the shell and suspension system is prohibited.**



**Metal clips**





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**Hardhat Quick Field Serviceability Inspection Guide**

❖ Employees will conduct hardhat serviceability inspections prior to initial issue and monthly thereafter to ensure the hardhat provides the protection it was initially designed to provide.

❖ THE VISUAL SERVICEABILITY INSPECTION:

- ❑ Industrial hardhats, not used in wildland firefighting, will contain a label affixed to the interior shell that indicates the hardhat meets, at a minimum, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z89.1 Type I or Type II, Class C, E, or G.
- ❑ **Wildland Firefighting Helmets/Hardhats** must contain the following two labels (not to be removed) on the inside of the helmet indicating:
  - ❑ Is compliant with NFPA 1977
  - ❑ Meets ANSI Z89.1 Type I, Class G
- ❑ May not be made of metal or contain metal parts or clips.
- ❑ The use of decals, stickers, or labels must be limited so that cracks may be spotted more readily.
- ❑ Shells that have become stiff, brittle, faded, dull, flake, exhibit a chalky appearance or begin to delaminate must be replaced.
- ❑ Hardhats must be replaced if they have sustained any physical damage that would potentially reduce the protective strength of the hardhat. Any dents, holes, penetrations, or cracks will immediately render a hardhat unserviceable. Deep gouges, nicks, scrapes, or abrasions will also render a hardhat unserviceable.
- ❑ **Suspensions** must be inspected for cracks, frayed or cut crown straps, torn headband or size adjustment slots and loss of pliability.

❖ THE PHYSICAL SERVICEABILITY INSPECTION:

- ❖ Compress the shell inward from the sides about 1 inch with both hands and then release the pressure. The shell should return to its original shape quickly, exhibiting elasticity. If the shell does not quickly return to its original shape, or IF it cracks, it must be replaced immediately.

