

Ansell



PROTECTION AGAINST CHEMICALS AND CUT

SPECIALISED PROTECTION SOLUTIONS CAN ADDRESS MULTIPLE RISKS

Industrial settings present a range of hazards that potentially threaten worker safety. This is amplified when multiple risk factors are present, such as exposure to chemical substances or other liquids, coupled with cut risk.

Till now, safety managers have been required to employ a 'one-glove-fits-all-applications' mentality, or to focus solely on the primary hazard when determining the appropriate hand protection alternative. This approach is ultimately flawed — and may even introduce new risks — because it usually entails compromise in vital areas such as comfort, dexterity and grip.

Fortunately, continual advances in technology are delivering material improvements that assist in development of superior specialist hand protection solutions, rendering the need to choose between one hazard or another obsolete.

The provision of unsuitable protection, or an environment that encourages workers to 'double-glove' — to wear separate cut and chemical protective gloves simultaneously — when faced with multiple exposures, will often lead to non-compliance of personal protective equipment (PPE) policy. This unnecessarily opens workers up to increased risk of harm and can have serious detrimental impact on productivity and profitability.

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PPE LEGISLATION IS NOT OPEN TO INTERPRETATION



PPE legislation places responsibility for provision of a safe workplace and suitable safety equipment firmly in the hands of the employer, so it's important to review the full gamut of available solutions to determine suitability for specific workplace conditions.

Given this obligation — particularly in the context of situations that present multiple and disparate risks — safety managers and business operators need to conduct a thorough workplace risk assessment.

When exposure to risk cannot be practically avoided, PPE equipment must be used. Employers are obliged to evaluate the risks, assess options and select protection that not only adheres to applicable legislation and standards, but is also demonstrably of good quality and best suited to the task.

Safety legislation dictates that the assessment process and reasons for selection of the chosen PPE be recorded. Workers must be made aware of present risks and supplied with appropriate and correctly fitted equipment. They also need to be provided with written rules when PPE utilisation is compulsory, as well as adequate instruction on the proper use of supplied protection.

In the context of multiple exposures, safety managers should opt for a solution that best defends workers against all present hazards — not the primary hazard alone.

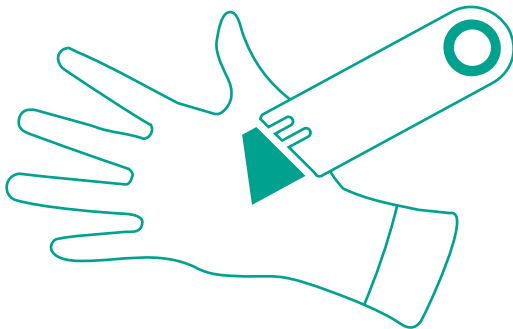
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CUT CONSIDERATIONS

Workplace cut injury is incredibly common. Employees in around 60% of businesses will suffer cut injuries to hands, second only to skin irritation in terms of reported occupational hand issues.

As per any PPE selection undertaking, the types of tasks being undertaken — and the corresponding risks — will determine the appropriate glove choice. Specialised cut protection gloves are fabricated using a cut resistance yarn that has been tested to perform to — or exceed — industry standards, offering best-in-class cut protection with no loss of dexterity or movement.

The wrong hand protection solution can cause injury due to a lack of adequate grip or loss of dexterity, as workers struggle to handle the tools or machinery required to carry out tasks. This is exacerbated in the case of applications where liquids are present, such as the petrochemical industry or when working with hydrocarbon derivatives, polymer derivatives, alcohol bases and esters.



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CHEMICAL CONCERNS

Chemical resistant gloves come in a wide variety of barrier materials, thicknesses and designs.

While each barrier material will protect against a spectrum of chemical groups, it will also have weak points – chemical groups or mixes where the ability to protect is less effective. There is no one solution for all applications, so you need to carefully identify the best alternative for the unique range of chemicals and liquids in your situation.

The chosen solution may also need to integrate additional high-performance features including an advanced grip and moisture management technology to ensure worker comfort.



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COMBINING CUT AND CHEMICAL PROTECTION



There was once a propensity for workers to ‘double-glove’ in situations where both cut risk and the presence of liquids threatened safety. This practice serves to endanger the wearer, as dexterity is easily compromised, which can lead to removal of one (or both) hand protection solutions.

Thanks to advances in material and construction technology, there are now solutions available that provide superior protection against both hazards in one design.

When selecting suitable defence against cut and chemical risk, industrial safety managers should look for a glove that features a suitable barrier against liquids and chemicals, to ensure hands are kept clean and comfortable. A glove that offers an enhanced oil grip will decrease fatigue and mitigate injury by offering increased control and minimising the force required to safely handle equipment.

Opting for a solution constructed from high-visibility fabric also increases awareness of hand location in low light conditions, ensuring workers are both seen and safe. Selecting a glove that incorporates high cut and puncture resistance levels offers the ultimate safeguard, as it is designed to address the dynamic nature of industrial working environments and subsequent exposure to hazards.

Selection of the most suitable hand protection selection can be complex, so consider utilising a facility such as Ansell’s Guardian service, designed to provide the optimum solution based on a personalised assessment of the unique exposure conditions in your application.

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