

4.3 Safety Equipment

Safety should always be your top priority. An injury on a job-site can not only risk the life of someone, but it can cause a business to collapse as well. The majority of injuries on job-sites can be prevented if a company has a Safety Plan (Module 1.3) as well as a strict policy to follow the guidelines of it. Don't ever relax the rules on safety. You and your staff will have more confidence and feel safer when there are correct policies and procedures in place to ensure everyone is being looked out for. This will also translate into better performance from everyone as well because safety won't be something they have to worry about.

To ensure everyone feels and acts safely, you need to start off with a Safety Plan that is passed along to everyone who works for your company. Testing them on the safety procedures is important in order to know that they comprehend what is being asked and expected. It also provides you, as the business owner, expected regulations that can lead to employment termination if they do not follow. Having employees sign a Safety Plan that acknowledges its content is good practice to cover yourself from possible legal situations. For example, if you don't provide clear guidelines of what is expected from an employee, it may be harder for you to legally terminate their employment. Be clear on what you demand for everyone's safety. If someone has a problem with it, it's better to know before hiring them in the first place. Most staff will find comfort in knowing their wellbeing is being considered and is important to their employer. This can also build employee loyalty as well.

Your local/municipal/federal workers safety requirements should be taken into careful consideration to avoid being fined and to ensure the safety of yourself, your staff, and the general public.

The following is a starting point only and is not a legal representation of what is required in your area.

Eye Protection: This should be a standard piece of equipment in any trade that uses a liquid product or pressure washer. Get into the habit of putting on safety glasses whenever stepping into the field. An eye only needs 5 pounds of pressure to have permanent damage done to it, so never take the risk.



Eye Wash Station: This can be a bottle instead of a fixed station, but anything that can flush out an eye should be kept in the safety checklist. Make sure you know how to use it before the time comes that you require it. It will prevent panic and you might not be capable of seeing clearly at the time that you need it.



Rubber Gloves: If you are using chemicals, make sure you protect your skin from any exposure, no matter how safe they are, or how small the job is. Prolonged exposure to even the safest products can cause discomfort in the long run. It's also much easier to clean up after a job before getting back into a vehicle if you just need to take off gloves and a jacket, rather than having to wash your hands and arms each time.



Rubber Suit: When using Graffiti Syrup you will need to wash it off with a pressure washer. Typically the substrate that has been graffitied will be vertical, so there is more chance that you will be washing at an upward angle.



Most substrates will have a curve, crack, or angle that can cause water (and product) to blow back at you. Having full coverage will make your job more comfortable and quicker by requiring less clean up of yourself after the job is done. It also allows you to get into situations that you might not want to do unprotected, such as getting close in a corner of a building that you know will cause water blowback.

Steel Toe Gumboots: Water from a pressure washer can etch or even cut concrete. The wand that you have control of will automatically want to point towards your feet when you're not pulling the trigger, so there is a chance you can have water hit your feet when you pull it again. Make sure you never wear street shoes of any kind when using a pressure washer. Getting cut with water is extremely dangerous and easily preventable. You also might be required to have steel toe footwear on some job-sites, so having them as part of your regular gear will get you onto jobs your competition might not be able to do as quickly as you. It also looks much more professional when you're ready for anything that comes your way, even if it's garbage or biohazards on the job-site.



Hardhat With Face Shield & Ear Protection: Similar to steel toe boots, a hardhat might be required on some job-sites. Fitted with a flip up face shield, and added to your rubber suit and boots, you will be able to approach any corner or place graffiti can appear. Prolonged noise coming from the pressure washer and wand can be hard on your ears, so adding ear protection can alleviate the strain while also acting as coverage or warmth.



Safety Data Sheets: The SDS you get with our products must be carried with the products at all times. If there is ever an emergency, doctors or poison control will ask for them in order to properly determine their course of action. An electronic copy can also be emailed when products are ordered, so they can be on file through your company and provided remotely.



Street Cones: Whenever you are removing graffiti, make sure to keep yourself and the general public safe from traffic, products, pressure washing hoses, water spray, etc... Place cones around your work zone and create a safe path (or block a path off if allowed), to keep people and pets away from whatever you're doing.



High Visibility Vest or Jacket: This is a piece of equipment that should be used the same as any safety glasses. Make it a habit to wear a safety vest whenever getting out of a work vehicle. Not only for your own safety, but people will also know you're there to work on the building. Taking photos of graffiti, or getting a sample of paint off of a building, can look suspicious, but a high visibility vest lets people know you're there to fix their problem.



First Aid Kit: No matter how light the situation or job is, accidents can happen. Be prepared and keep your first aid kit up to date and properly stocked.



Fire Extinguisher: Always have a fire extinguisher available when using a gas or diesel motor, or have anything flammable on your work vehicle. Make sure to have one that can put out a chemical fire, it is kept up to date, and you know how to use it before the emergency happens.



You may want to make some additions that are customized to your local needs or comforts. You may also want to include a respirator for personal comfort or long exposure to products. It's better to be over prepared than under prepared. This list is a starting guide that you should take into consideration. Your local safety regulations might require more items, or they may not require you to have some of these items, but you should.

+ MODULE 4 EXERCISES

1. Decide on your vehicle/trailer configuration for your company and update your Business Plan Budget to accommodate these expenses.
2. Check your Equipment Checklist and update your Business Plan Budget to accommodate these expenses.
3. Make a list of tools and update your Business Plan Budget to accommodate these expenses.
4. Make a list of safety gear and update your Business Plan Budget to accommodate these expenses.

+ ATTACHMENTS

Equipment Checklist
Safety Equipment Checklist
Pressure Washer Diagram
Pressure Washing Nozzle Size Chart
Plumbing Configuration 1
Plumbing Configuration 2
Exhaust Diagram

+ LINKS

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