

Protect Yo

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Sailors should know when they need gloves to accomplish maintenance, handle paint, or perform other hazardous work. Sailors also associate protective gloves with medical and electrical work. Therefore, when they need hand protection they head to sick bay for latex surgical gloves, to the mess decks for some plastic food-handling gloves, or to tool issue for electrician's gloves.

I've often turned Sailors away from sick bay when they were trying to get gloves. For some reason, many of our fleet shipmates don't understand that thin, surgical gloves are not proper PPE for deck evolutions or for performing other potentially hazardous planned or corrective maintenance.

It's our job to care about their well-being. It is frustrating to see some divisions buying their own surgical gloves. It is not uncommon for me to find a box of latex surgical gloves tucked away in a ship's paint-issue space. These are not safe practices! Surgical gloves are expensive and do not offer the proper protection from hazardous chemicals. Latex or natural-rubber surgical gloves should be used for medical purposes only. On top of that, natural rubber is not recommended for use with petroleum and oil-based solvents, such as gasoline, or where resistance to grease or oil solvents is required. Neither latex medical gloves nor plastic food-

Navy photo by PH2 M. C. Farrington



When working with dangerous equipment and hazardous material, always wear all required protective equipment. Taking even a seemingly insignificant shortcut can result in serious and possible permanent injury.

our Hands!

Navy photo by JO3 R. David Valdez



Always wear the proper gloves for the task at hand. An MSDS, or a maintenance requirement card—MRC—will indicate the kind of gloves (and other safety equipment) required for your work.

handling gloves are approved for use with industrial cleaners, solvents or other hazardous chemicals.

I recently met a young, energetic Sailor working in the ship's laundry. She showed me where she had been burned by one of the laundry detergents, when it splashed onto her left hand. She said, "It didn't burn at first, so I didn't think anything of it. I just wiped my hand on my uniform to dry it." After having it on her skin for about five minutes or so, she began to feel an intense itch on her arm and on her thigh where she had wiped her hand on her trousers. Not realizing this was a corrosive chemical, she continued with what she was doing. After a few more minutes, she noticed a red spot on the back of her hand. She immediately began running cool water on it from the nearby eyewash station. She did not know to read the

MSDS before using hazardous chemicals, nor was she aware of the requirement to wear industrial gloves and goggles when changing out that particular detergent container. She was very lucky her quick actions kept this situation from becoming worse. She didn't go to medical for treatment; therefore, it was not reported to her supervisors.

Another situation I will share with you is the one about a Sailor patching a hole. He was on the boat deck preparing epoxy resin to patch a hole in the captain's gig. As the epoxy began to harden, it expanded up and out of the can, onto the Sailor's right hand. When the resin began to burn, the Sailor tried to wipe it off. Instead, his wiping removed his top layer of skin. He had no permanent disability, just a quick lesson on the importance of wearing protective gloves. ☺

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For More Info...

"Guidance for when hand protection is required is found on the chemical's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) under the control measures section."



The box clearly indicates these are latex exam gloves—they must be used for only that specific purpose. Do not substitute one kind of glove for another, unless so indicated on the MSDS or MRC.