



## SAFETY BRIEF: TRAFFIC AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT SAFETY

There are some critical safety topics that need to be reviewed more frequently than others and construction site safety falls into that category. We had a safety brief on this topic back in 2015, but this is an updated version prepared by Shane.

As consultants, we find ourselves in a variety of work environments. Some of the more hazardous and common locations we work are locations where there are moving vehicles. We are frequently on construction sites with heavy equipment or working on utility client projects in the streets of Chicago such as pictured below.



Numerous factors that make these types of environments even more dangerous include:

- Noise from motors and vehicles that may limit your hearing sense
- Limited visibility from machinery/dust
- Night work and limited lighting
- Work that is in close proximity to traffic
- Inclement weather
- The motorist's perspective passing by may be influenced by: traffic lane confusion, workers difficult to see, limited driver visibility from weather or dust from roadwork and texting/other distractions.
- Heavy equipment operators have limited vision sometimes because of their location.

This all adds up to a dangerous work environment. You need to be aware of your surroundings, your work practices, and what you can do to protect yourself. The following are specific steps you should take to protect yourself from physical injury when you find yourself in these environments.

1. Wear appropriate reflective high-visibility vests. Review the chart on the following page and become familiar with the various recommended high visibility vests versus the work environment. Work with your project manager for obtaining the proper high visibility vest for the jobsite. Note that considerations have to be made for flame retardant/flame resistant vests in certain environments (i.e.: ComEd job sites).



2. Minimize the amount of time you spend in the ‘hazard zone’ where you are potentially exposed to moving traffic or equipment. Do what you need to do in the ‘hazard zone’, but then move off to a safe location whenever you can. Do not stay in a ‘hazard zone’ unless you are conducting a specific job task (get in, get done, get out). Move conversations or other tasks to a safe zone whenever possible.
3. Make sure you familiarize yourself with your surroundings, traffic patterns and where your work tasks take you. Ensure proper marked off areas are in place to keep traffic away from the work zone.
4. Make sure to park in safe and proper location when pulling up to jobsites in the street.
5. Never run through moving traffic or machines.
6. Make sure your safety glasses are clean and other PPE fits properly at all times.
7. Be aware of and understand the motion of heavy equipment on your jobsite.
8. Always contact your project manager if you have any safety questions or concerns about a jobsite environment.

Below are the classifications for High Visibility Vests. Always use high visibility garments in compliance with ANSI/ISEA 107-2010 & ANSI/ISEA 107-2004. Note how activities and job site conditions change the required garment class.

Worker Activity	Garment Class
<p><b>Class 1:</b> Workers where traffic does not exceed 25 mph and there is ample separation from the traffic. These workers often include parking service attendants, warehouse workers in traffic, shopping cart retrievers and those doing sidewalk maintenance.</p>	<p><b>Class 1:</b> Garment must be relatively conspicuous, with background material equal to 217 in. in total area and retroreflective bands not less than 25mm wide.</p> <p>Intended for workers whose tasks don't divert their attention from approaching traffic.</p> <p>Intended for locations where the worker is separated from traffic, which is traveling no faster than 25 mph.</p>
<p><b>Class 2:</b> Workers who work near roadways where traffic exceeds 25 mph and workers who need greater visibility in inclement weather. In general, railway workers, school crossing guards, parking and toll gate personnel, airport ground crews and law enforcement personnel directing</p>	<p><b>Class 2:</b> Greater visibility than the Class 1 garments. Background material must equal 755 in., and the minimum width of retroreflective bands is 35mm.</p> <p>Provides enhanced visibility during inclement weather.</p> <p>Intended for workers whose tasks divert their attention from approaching traffic and for those who must work near vehicles exceeding 25 mph.</p>
<p><b>Class 3:</b> Workers with high task loads in a wide range of weather conditions where traffic exceeds 50 mph. The standard recommends these garments for all roadway construction personnel, vehicle operators, utility workers, survey crews, emergency responders, railway workers and accident site investigators.</p>	<p><b>Class 3:</b> Superior visibility—the highest level of conspicuity. Background material must total 1240 in. Garment must have sleeves with retroreflective material between the shoulders and elbows. The width of retroreflective bands shall not be less than 50mm wide.</p> <p>Provides maximum visibility for workers who have tasks that place them in imminent danger from approaching traffic.</p> <p>Provides maximum visibility when the wearer must be conspicuous at a minimum distance of 1,280 feet.</p>

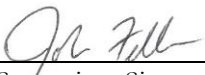


## TRAFFIC & HEAVY EQUIPMENT SAFETY QUIZ

- 1) All of the following can make a street job more dangerous except:
  - a. Noise from motors and vehicles
  - b. Night work and limited lighting
  - c. An idiot driver texting
  - d. High visibility work vest
  
- 2) There are different types of protective vests and you need to work with your project manager to ensure you have the right one for your job.  
 True  
 False
  
- 3) You need to wear a Class 1 safety vest at all worksites that involve traffic or heavy equipment.  
 True  
 False
  
- 4) One of the main things you can do to protect yourself on jobsites with moving vehicles is spend as little time as possible in the 'hazard zone'.  
 True  
 False
  
- 5) Most of our jobsites will not require a Class 3 safety vest, but we may choose to wear this anyway.  
 True  
 False
  
- 6) Kevin Konkey reviewed this document and his take away was the following and is good advice:  
"The message I got from this is as follows: stay out of traffic, wear the appropriate vest and keep your head out of your ass."  
 True  
 False

**SCORE: PASS / FAIL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date