

## Categories of PPE

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is commonly placed into one of three categories, ensuring clear understanding of which type of PPE is suitable for a particular activity or job.

### Category I

Category I PPE is designed to protect users against minimal risks: such as superficial mechanical injury; contact with water or cleaning materials of weak action such as: mechanical action whose effects are superficial (gardening gloves, thimbles, etc.), cleaning materials of weak action and easily reversible effects (gloves affording protection against diluted detergent solutions, etc.), risks encountered in the handling of hot components which do not expose the user to a temperature exceeding 50°C or to dangerous impacts (gloves, aprons for professional use, etc.), atmospheric agents of a neither exceptional nor extreme nature (headgear, seasonal clothing, footwear, etc.), minor impacts and vibrations which do not affect vital areas of the body and whose effects cannot cause irreversible lesions (light anti-scalping helmets, gloves, light footwear, etc.), sunlight (sunglasses).

### Category II

Category II PPE covers all equipment that does not fall in category one or three such as: high visibility clothing, heat protective items, including welder's clothing and gloves, mechanical protective gloves, most safety footwear, antistatic protective clothing, hearing protection, all eye protectors and filters not in Category III, all helmets not in Category III.

### Category III

Category III PPE is designed to protect the user against very serious risks such as irreversible damage to health, or death, such as: filtering respiratory devices for protection against solid and liquid aerosols or irritant, dangerous, toxic or radiotoxic gases, respiratory protection devices providing full insulation from the atmosphere, including those for use in diving, PPE providing only limited protection against chemical attack or against ionizing radiation (this includes all chemical protective PPE), emergency equipment for use in high-temperature environments, the effects of which are comparable to those of an air temperature of 100°C or more and which may or may not be characterized by the presence of infra-red radiation, flames or the projection of large amounts of molten material (this includes all firefighter's PPE, PPE for use in metal foundries, and Arc thermal protective PPE), emergency equipment for use in low-temperature environments the effects of which are comparable to those of an air temperature of -50°C or less, PPE to protect against falls from a height, PPE against electrical risks and dangerous voltages or that used as insulation in high tension work.