

High-visibility safety apparel makes the wearer more visible to traffic under any conditions

What is High-Visibility Safety Apparel?

High-visibility safety apparel (HVSA) includes various types of garments that make the wearer more visible during both daytime and nighttime conditions. Such garments may include vests, trousers, leg gaiters, t-shirts, and jackets.

What Type of High-Visibility Safety Apparel am I Required to Wear?

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices requires all workers within the right-of-way to wear Performance Class 2 or 3 apparel based on the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)/International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA) 107 guidelines. These guidelines include performance classes and required background and retroreflective material for vests under each performance class.

A Class 2 vest has adequate background material and retroreflective material that outlines the upper portion of the body. Class 3 vests have retroreflective material on the sleeves and provides 360 degree visibility. Class E trousers have additional retroreflective material designed to make the lower portion of the body more visible. Leg gaiters include retroreflective material in the lower portion of the legs. High visibility T-shirts and jackets can also meet the performance requirements.

Transportation agencies may have additional requirements for apparel that may exceed the minimum. It is important to check your local requirements and standards for what to wear.

When Should High-Visibility Safety Apparel Be Replaced?

HVSA should be replaced when it becomes faded, torn, dirty, soiled, worn, or defaced. The typical useful service life of high-visibility safety apparel depends on the type of work the wearer performs. ANSI includes a provision for a single use coverall.

Make sure your HVSA is functioning by following these guidelines:

- HVSA worn daily has a life expectancy of approximately 6 months.
- Service life may be up to 3 years for HVSA not worn daily.
- Replace when faded, torn, dirty, soiled, worn, or defaced.
- Replace when not visible for 1,000 feet
- Garment tags may recommend a maximum number of wash cycles.

When HVSA is ready for replacement, request a replacement garment from your safety compliance officer or supervisor. Ensure that you are wearing the appropriate type for your job function. Once you have received your new HVSA, cut your old garment in half so that it cannot be reused and then dispose of it properly.

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Updated Guideline: High-Visibility Safety Apparel in Highway Work Zones



Image: Michigan DOT

Guidance on Which Garment to Wear and When to Replace It

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Acceptable



Image: Virginia DOT

Characteristics: Vivid color contrast and high reflectivity. **Note:** This picture was taken with a flash and simulates nighttime conditions. This is a Class 3 vest with Class E trousers.



Image: Virginia DOT

HVSA that is used but is in like-new condition is characterized as having excellent color contrast, excellent reflectivity, and is not faded or soiled. These are leg gaiters.

Marginal

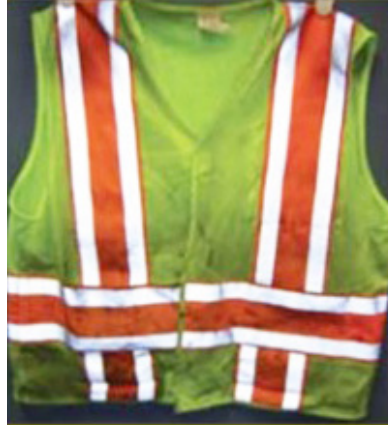


Image: Michigan DOT

Characteristics: Good reflectivity although the vest has some soiling and light fading. This is a Class 2 vest.

Other Considerations for Personal Protective Equipment:

- Use eyeglasses or flexible or rigid goggles with side protection.
- Wear appropriate hardhats or consider helmets (these include chin straps) for activities where a hardhat could fall off.
- Where high-visibility T-shirts are allowed, make sure they are not altered or tucked in and that sleeves remain intact and are not rolled up.
- Provide external lighting for enhanced visibility during nighttime work.
- Wear steel-toe safety footwear.

Unacceptable

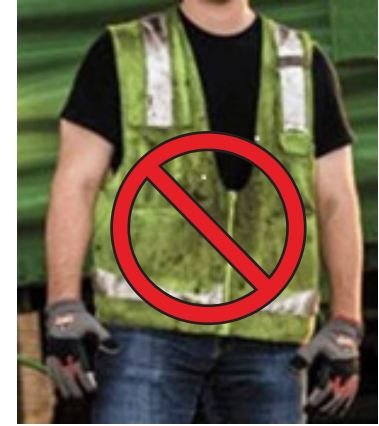


Image: Virginia DOT

Characteristics: Little or no reflectivity and soiled or faded material.



Image: Michigan DOT

Characteristics: Poor color contrast, low or no reflectivity, significant fading and soiling, and deteriorated reflective strips.