There are workplace circumstances where employees’ safety may be jeopardized, or the potential for hazard increased because of inadequate or inappropriate work clothing. Burns, bruises, cuts, punctures and poison ivy are common injuries caused by inadequate or inappropriate attire on the job. Protection must also be considered for UV rays, and lyme and bloodborne diseases. The single most important criterion for determining adequate and appropriate work clothing is:

**WHETHER EMPLOYEE ATTIRE INCREASES INJURY POTENTIAL**

If the answer is “YES”, then proper work clothing is required and shall be adhered to by employees, supervisors, and managers. Over the course of any work day, conditions and work assignments may change. Emergencies can develop and priorities shift to change a work situation from one which does not require attention to adequate and appropriate attire to one which does, or vise versa. The N.Y.S. Department of Transportation adopts and enforces work clothing guidelines to protect employees. Employees shall, in turn, take steps to protect themselves from injuries which can be prevented by adherence to work clothing guidelines. When there is any doubt regarding the interpretation or application of this policy, first line managers shall decide conservatively and may request advice from Employee Safety & Health.

**POLICY**

The following Department policy addresses adequate and appropriate work clothing for protection of all employees in various work environments and/or assignments. It does not supercede or replace High Visibility Apparel & Hard Hat Policy; Safety Footwear Policy; nor preclude use of other required personal protective equipment, such as gloves, eye and face protection, chaps, etc. necessary to protect against workplace hazards. This policy specifically addresses clothing, footwear, hair length/style, and jewelry.
Employees shall adhere to Department Work Clothing Guidelines as part of their work responsibility, in locations including all Department facilities, construction sites, labs, batch plants, and all areas on the pavement, shoulder or within or outside the right-of-way. This policy applies to all Department personnel who work in or visit such locations, and those not normally affected by this policy who enter areas where adequate and appropriate attire is essential. This policy also applies to non-DOT employees on NYSDOT property.

- Employees working on the highway pavement, shoulder, right-of-way, areas outside the right-of-way, or exposed to caustic or toxic chemicals, extremely hot materials, splashing from hazardous liquids, sparks, flying chips or other materials, abrasives or corrosives, heavy brush, etc., shall not wear apparel which leaves their legs or arms uncovered. Employees shall wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as heat or cut resistant sleeves.

- Employees are prohibited from wearing personal garments that do not protect the shoulders, torso, or legs, such as tank tops, sleeveless shirts, altered t-shirts or shorts. This applies to personal garments worn under Department-approved vests.

- Employees working in any location where the potential exists for foot injury shall conform to Department policy regarding safety footwear. Even if considered a “visitor” (as described in the Safety Footwear Policy), employees shall not wear inadequate or inappropriate footwear, such as sneakers, sandals, “clogs”, or “flip-flops” in any location where the potential exists for foot injuries from burns, falling objects, penetration, wheel or track vehicles, machinery, tools, etc.

- Employees working with equipment, machinery and power tools with accessible moving parts shall not:
  
  o Wear loose fitting clothing (Safety Apparel may not be “loose-fitting”).
  
  o Wear hair in braids or ponytails, unless secured atop the head.
  
  o Wear rings, bracelets, necklaces, or earrings which could become entangled.