



## Bulletin

### Non Crossrail – HSE Bulletin - Storage of Dirty Gloves in Hard Hats

#### What happened:

It was recently reported to the HSE by a major contractor that an employee developed a severe skin infection (Cellulitis) on his head. The most likely cause was the storing of dirty/soiled gloves in the individual's hard hat.

Gloves can become soiled and contaminated during work. Bacteria can then build up and when placed in a hat, the dirty gloves have direct contact with the skin and if there is a break in the skin this will cause infection.

In the reported case, the hard hat's forehead 'sweat' band was also very dirty, from the gloves and general sweat. This would increase the risk of infection in any hard hat. Although it makes a 'convenient' storage area, your hard hat is not



#### Future considerations:

- Do not store dirty or soiled gloves inside your hard hat.
- Check your skin regularly for cuts and abrasions.
- Cover any cuts or abrasions with a suitable dressing
- Check your PPE regularly! Look at the condition of your hard hat. Get a new one if necessary (you can also just replace the head band).
- Check the condition of your gloves. If they are heavily soiled or contaminated, clean or replace them.
- Helmet mounted Ear Muffs when pushed up on the helmet can be contaminated by anything that drips or lands on the outside of your helmet. The contaminated parts may then contact the skin around your ears.
- Goggles if carried on your helmet, can be contaminated by anything that drips or lands on the outside of the helmet. The contaminated face seal may then be in contact with the skin around eyes.
- Make sure you keep your immunisations up to date. If you are unsure of your immunisation status, contact your GP Surgery.
- The dirtier the task – the more frequent and thorough checks need to be. Remember, poorly stored/maintained PPE can cause a health issue.