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Being unprepared is how a job ends before it starts.

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Two things decide whether an install day goes well. The gear that gets you badged onto an active site, and a short list of hazards that mean stop and call someone else. None of this is compliance instruction. The site owns the PPE assessment. This is what to recognize so you are not turned away at the gate or blamed for a failure you could have prevented.

On a finished office install, street clothes are usually fine. On active construction, the general contractor will expect four items before they let you on site: a hard hat, safety-toe footwear, high-visibility apparel, and eye protection. Each one carries a standard and a rating worth knowing.

- Hard hat / safety helmet, ANSI/ISEA Z89.1. Type I is top impact only; Type II adds lateral.
- Safety-toe footwear, ASTM F2413. Impact and compression protection at the toe.
- High-visibility apparel, ANSI/ISEA 107. Class 2 is the common job site bar; Class 3 covers high-speed traffic or low light.
- Eye protection, ANSI Z87.1. Impact-rated glasses marked Z87+, with side shields for the drilling and cutting an install involves.

One note... you MAY want to show up with your own personal PPE - sometimes the job site may have PPE for you to borrow, but bringing your own ALWAYS works out better. I like to have WLAN Pros logos on all my hard hats and hi-vis vests... it helps folks recognize what you are on site to do. You can also augment things like flashing warning lights on your PPE to make you easier to see in warehouse or other chaotic environments.

As my friend Ferney likes to say, "The power of the vest" is a real thing.

Some things on a site are not yours to work around. Recognize them, stop, and hand them off. Improvising a workaround is how a routine cable pull turns into a health or legal incident.

Asbestos or lead in older buildings. Drilling or cutting can disturb asbestos ceiling tiles, plaster, or lead paint, and the cut-off year differs by country, so check what your local rule actually is. Do not disturb it. Notify the building owner and a licensed abatement contractor.

Confined spaces. A crawlspace, tunnel, manhole, or some mechanical rooms can be a permit-required confined space. Stop and check before you enter.

A lot of your installs happen on a ladder or a lift, on an active site, working around other trades. Knowing the four PPE ratings a general contractor will ask for keeps you from being turned away at the gate. And the stop-and-call-it-in flags keep a drill bit from turning an ordinary install into an incident report.

Badge-on gear, and the judgment to stop when a hazard is above your pay grade. Carry both and the active-site install stops being the part of the job that goes wrong.

This is a field reference, not code or design guidance. Confirm requirements with the people in charge on that site.

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