



## **Mt Hood Meadows – Cooper Spur Helmet Policy**

### **Mission:**

Improve the safety and health of our team members and mitigate the risk associated with head injuries and traumatic brain injuries while sharing our commitment to safety with our team members and guests.

### **Overview:**

The ski industry has moved from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> most dangerous industry in the United States over the past 5 years. According to OSHA, there have been 82 reported employee fatalities at Ski Areas/Resorts since 2002, with 34 of those fatalities occurring in the last five years (data stops in July 2017). Mt Hood Meadows has shown a strong commitment to workplace safety and our focus on safety is strongly rooted in our core values. As we continue to grow our safety culture, we closely follow industry trends, incident reports and pay attention to guidance from our insurance carriers and OSHA. This policy is in accordance with OSHA Standard 1910.135(a)(1)- The employer shall ensure that each affected employee wears a protective helmet when working in areas where there is a potential for injury to the head from falling objects.

In the past several years, multiple ski areas in the US have been cited by OSHA with “Serious Violations” because they did not require employees whose jobs hazards included risk of head injury to wear helmets while on the job. Some of these citations were the result of an incident that involved a head injury and some were not directly connected to an incident or cause for investigation but were revealed during investigations. The NSAA has alerted us to the likelihood that these citations may increase in severity from “Serious Violations” (generally in the \$7-15k range) to “Willful Violations” (generally in the \$50-70k range). This change would come about because we know of the risk, we know that helmets can reduce the severity of head injuries and many resorts now have employee helmet programs.

Ski areas across the country are beginning to implement employee helmet programs which has shown light on the need to develop an employee helmet program at Mt Hood Meadows.

### **\* Who will be required to wear a helmet at work?**

- On-hill employees (employees who are alpine skiing or snowboarding on the job) are required to wear a snow sports helmet while skiing or snowboarding on the job (this includes anytime that they are using their skis/snowboard and working).
- Employees are required to wear a climbing helmet or snow sports helmet when climbing lift towers or light poles.
- Employees are required to wear a snow sports helmet or DOT helmet when operating a snowmobile.
- Employees are required to wear a DOT helmet when operating an ATV.

- Employees are required to wear a snow sports helmet when working in the lift terminal/ski under area unless they are outside the RFID gates or inside a building (lift shack or gantry).
- Employees whose job hazard analysis or department training includes the use of a hard hat or helmet are required to wear a helmet as outlined by their JHA and department training.

### **How will employees get helmets?**

MHM will provide free uniform helmets to be checked out from HR

Employees who purchase their own helmet can bring the purchase receipt to their manager and receive a \$20 reimbursement every 3 years.

Lift shacks will contain at least one universal fit helmet for use which will stay in the lift shack.

### **How will helmets be inspected?**

All helmets need to be inspected prior to use and after an impact/possible damage. Department Managers will be responsible for assuring helmet inspections are completed. Any impact to the helmet must be reported via Near Miss to a supervisor or manager. Any helmet that doesn't pass inspection needs to be replaced.

Inspection will include a thorough check for the following:

- Cracks on outer shell
- Dents to outer shell or inner foam
- Degradation of foam (crumbling, shrinking)
- Broken or ripped straps
- Cracked or broken buckles

If any of the damage listed above is present, the helmet will need to be replaced. The helmet can be replaced via the same means of acquiring a helmet (\$20 reimbursement every 3 years or a uniform helmet).

\*Exception: Employees doing physically strenuous work may decide to remove their helmet if the risk of a heat or cold injury/illness is more significant than the risk of a head injury. If an employee does remove their helmet for this reason, they should expect to explain their decision to their Supervisor or Manager. Misusing this exception may result in disciplinary action including possible termination.