

LEGISLATION

Recent amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act – new Regulations

Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) No. 85 of 1993

On 6 March 2025 the Minister of Employment and Labour promulgated the Physical Agents Regulations, 2024, the Noise Exposure Regulations, 2024, and a notice regarding amendments to the General Safety Regulations.

Below are some points covered under the new regulations:

THE PHYSICAL AGENTS REGULATIONS, 2024

- Information, instruction and training
- Duties of persons who may be exposed to a physical agent
- Duties of designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers
- Physical agent exposure risk assessment
- Physical agent exposure monitoring
- Medical screening and medical surveillance
- Cold stress
- Heat stress
- Illumination
- Indoor air quality
- Vibration
- Occupational non-ionising radiation
- Prevention or control of exposure to a physical agent
- Personal protective equipment and facilities
- Maintenance of control measures
- Records
- Physical agent technical committee

NEW

The Environmental Regulations for Workplaces, 1987 as amended, will be repealed 18 months after the date of promulgation of the Physical Agent Regulations. The Physical Agent Regulations, 2024 will therefore be effective from the 6th September 2026.

THE NOISE EXPOSURE REGULATIONS, 2024

- Exposure to noise
- Information, instruction and training
- Duties of persons who may be exposed to noise
- Duties of designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers
- Noise exposure risk assessment
- Noise exposure monitoring
- Medical screening and medical surveillance
- Prevention or control of exposure to noise
- Noise zone
- Hearing protective devices
- Maintenance of control measures
- Code of practice
- Noise technical committee

Employers are encouraged to begin implementation to ensure full compliance by the effective date:
6th SEPTEMBER 2026

The Noise-Induced Hearing Loss Regulations, 2003 will be repealed 18 months after the date of promulgation of the Noise Exposure Regulations. The Noise Exposure Regulations, 2024 will therefore be effective from the 6th September 2026.

GENERAL SAFETY REGULATIONS

Recent amendments to the General Safety Regulations, effective in March 2025 consolidate previous rules and introduce new requirements, focussing on:

- Risk assessments
- Machinery safety
- Housekeeping
- Flood precautions
- Fire safety

AMENDMENTS

Southern Office

PO Box 27607
Greenacres
Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth)
6057

Tel: +27 (0)41 365 6846
info@safetech.co.za

Northern Office

PO Box 80171
Doornpoort
Pretoria
0017

Tel: +27 (0)82 4111 571
sonja.pedro@safetech.co.za



Department of Employment
and Labour Approved
Inspection Authority
(OH0049-CI-09)



OH0049



OHAIA-A 005 (2026)

CONTACT US TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES FOR YOUR BUSINESS:

- Occupational Hygiene Surveys
- EHS Risk Assessments
- Ergonomics Risk Assessments
- EHS Management System Development and Implementation
- Environmental Monitoring
- Identification of EHS Legal Requirements and Compliance Audits
- Internal Auditor Training
- Specialised EHS Training



Department of Employment and Labour Approved Inspection Authority (OH0049-CI-09)



OH0049



OHAIA-A 005 (2026)

STEEL CAP VS COMPOSITE

Step Safely into the New Year



For the past 95 years or so, steel was the only choice when safety toe cap footwear was required. However, consumer desires for lightweight boots have led to the development of toe caps made from aluminum alloy and, in the past decade or so, composite materials such as polycarbonate, fiberglass and carbon fiber.

With the recent introduction of alternative material, it has become more difficult to know the right foot protection for the job. It helps to compare them by their protective abilities and applications. The job environment is a key factor in deciding between steel and composite toe caps.



Steel toe shoes are a staple in industries where foot protection from falling objects and compression is essential.

Composite toe shoes provide protection in hazardous environments while reducing the shoe's weight.

What you need to know about the difference between the two options:

CATEGORY	COMPOSITE TOE	STEEL TOE
Protection	Moderate (meets safety standards but less force resistance)	High (against heavy impact and sharp objects)
Durability	Durable	Very durable
Waterproofing	Available, often combined with materials that enhance waterproofing	Available in some styles, effectiveness varies
Chemical Resistance	Better, less prone to corrosion due to non-metallic nature	Good; could corrode if not properly treated
Weight	Lighter	Heavier
Cost	More expensive	Generally less expensive
Material	Plastic, carbon fiber or kevlar	Steel
Best for	Environments with more electrical hazards, extreme temperatures or where less weight and more insulation are required	Environments with high risk of heavy objects falling or rolling onto feet or where durability and lower cost are needed

Ensuring that you buy a South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) compliant product is an important step when choosing a safety shoe. Compliant safety footwear will bear the SABS approved logo on its box or label. Safety footwear must conform to SANS 20345:2014 and SANS 20347:2014 laid down by the South African Bureau of Standards. These standards originate from the international standards ISO 20345:2011: Safety Footwear and ISO 20347:2012: Occupational Footwear.