

# Care and Use of MSA V-Gard® Helmets-Frequently Asked Questions and Answers



**IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER TO READ AND FOLLOW CAREFULLY ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS ACCOMPANYING YOUR HELMET. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE WARNINGS AND THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE BAG PROVIDED WITH YOUR HELMET CAN RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH. If you have any questions concerning the care and use of your MSA V-Gard helmet, contact your MSA Sales Associate or MSA Customer Service at 800-MSA-2222.**

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is the service life of my V-Gard helmet?	The V-Gard helmet was designed with high quality, wear-resistant materials but it WILL NOT last forever. The protective properties of the helmet WILL be degraded by exposure to many common work environments, such as temperature extremes, chemical exposure, sunlight and normal daily wear and tear. MSA recommends the following replacement schedule: Suspension - replace after NO MORE THAN 12 months; Entire Helmet - replace after NO MORE THAN 5 years. Remember that these are MAXIMUM useful service life guidelines. Wear or damage noticed during a regular inspection MUST be the determining factor for possible earlier replacement. In any case, ALWAYS replace the helmet after it has withstood impact or penetration.
There is a date code on the brim of my V-Gard helmet – is this when the service life starts?	A helmet's service life starts when it is placed in service. This date should be recorded in the helmet, either on the ANSI label or the date of service labels, which are available from MSA customer service. Please note that the "date code" on the brim of your MSA helmet is the date of manufacture, not the starting date for useful service.
I have a suspension from another manufacturer. Can I use it with my MSA V-Gard helmet?	NEVER attempt to interchange suspensions from one hat manufacturer to another. Use only the appropriate MSA replacement parts.
Can I wear my V-Gard helmet backwards?	Since the suspension attachment points on an MSA V-Gard helmet are the same from front to back, the suspension can be reversed and the cap worn with the brim facing the rear and still meet the requirements of the applicable protective headwear standard (ANSI Z89.1-2003) – (All V-Gard suspensions except the UniPro Suspension). Also meets CAN/CSA 294.1 2005 ONLY with 1-Touch® and Fas-Trac suspensions. Be sure that the suspension has been reversed so that the nape strap is in the rear.
Can I wear a kerchief or bandanna with MSA head protection?	A kerchief or bandanna should not affect the impact absorption properties of an MSA helmet AS LONG AS it is worn SMOOTHLY on the top of the head. Caution should be taken to avoid bunching up of the material, which could cause pressure points and affect the helmet's ability to work as desired. To assure the best possible fit, a ratchet suspension and/or a chinstrap should be used.
Can a baseball cap be worn between a person's head and the suspension of an MSA helmet?	The use of a baseball cap may interfere with the capability of the suspension of our helmets to work properly during an impact. Therefore, it is MSA's recommendation that you should not place a baseball cap between your head and the suspension.
How does the color and shape of MSA helmets affect the body temperature of the wearer?	We do not know of any studies relating to the shape or color and heat. Generally darker color helmets absorb more heat than lighter colors, but this can be affected by a variety of environmental conditions.
What are the dielectric markings on the V-Gard helmet label?	There are three ANSI and CSA electrical insulation classifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class E - Tested to 20,000 volts</li> <li>• Class G - Tested to 2,200 volts</li> <li>• Class C - Not tested (no dielectric protection)</li> </ul>
Can I paint my MSA V-Gard helmet?	Never paint a V-Gard helmet. Paint may attack and damage the helmet's shell, thereby reducing the degree of protection originally provided.
Can I use stickers or tape on MSA V-Gard helmets?	It is permissible to use pressure-sensitive stickers or tape with self-adhesive backing AS LONG AS THEY ARE NOT closer than 1/2 inch from the edge of the helmet. According to MSA's testing, such stickers or tape in such a location will not affect the burn-through (i.e. dielectric classification) or the structure of an MSA helmet. However, because it is impossible for us to test all pressure-sensitive adhesives, caution should still be taken when making use of such materials. Also, be sure that when these are applied that you are not covering any damage on the helmet.
Can I put anything in the space between the V-Gard helmet shell and suspension?	Items such as gloves, cigarettes and earplugs should NEVER be stored between the suspension and the shell. This space is needed when the shell and suspension absorbs the energy of an impact. Such objects in this space can transmit large forces to the head and neck, resulting in serious injury or death.
What if I need to drill into my V-Gard helmet to attach hearing protection manufactured by a company other than MSA?	Use only MSA accessories with the helmet. Modifications or use of other than MSA accessories can reduce the protection levels or dielectric properties designed into the helmet.