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# Handling Fibreglass

**Using fiberglass insulation offers a highly efficient way to help lock away thermal energy.**

Although it serves its primary purpose well, fiberglass insulation can irritate the skin, eyes and respiratory system, which is why it's important to follow some basic safety precautions when handling it.

## Why Fiberglass Insulation Causes Irritation

Fiberglass insulation causes irritation due to the numerous glass particles it contains. While there are different types of fiberglass insulation, most of them are produced by embedding small grains of sand or glass into the fibres. This creates a highly efficient yet abrasive material.

It's not uncommon for people to touch fiberglass without realizing its potential for irritation. To the untrained eye, it looks like a soft material. After running your hands on this otherwise normal-looking material, however, you may notice an itching and burning sensation on the exposed area.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Before handling fiberglass insulation, you should first gear up in the appropriate personal protective equipment (or PPE for short). This includes protective goggles, long pants, socks, boots, long-sleeved shirt and a cap. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OHS) recommends loose, non-constricting clothing to minimize the risk for direct skin contact with fiberglass particles.

Another key piece of PPE that shouldn't be overlooked when handling fiberglass insulation is a dust mask. Even if you don't physically touch the insulation with your skin, being around it could result in particles entering your respiratory system. Each time you take a breath, some of the fiberglass particles may enter your lungs, causing irritation and breathing problems.

When you are finished handling fiberglass insulation, remove your clothes and set them aside to wash in a separate load. It's not uncommon for some of the fiberglass particles to linger on shirts and pants for days after they are worn. Thankfully, these particles are easily rinsed away by washing them.

## Other Fiberglass Insulation Handling Tips

- **Keep fiberglass insulation in its original packaging for as long as possible.**
- **Use caution to avoid stirring up fiberglass particles into the air.**
- **Avoid rubbing your skin, eyes or mouth.**
- **Make sure the area is well ventilated.**



**Gloves required**



**Safety glasses  
required**



**Dust mask required**