

The Air Force Safety Center was recently asked whether medical grade silicone rings could be worn in industrial areas.



In short, the answer is “no.” The proscription contained within AFI 91-203 addresses several underlying safety concerns and prohibits the wear of jewelry irrespective of the material used in construction of the jewelry. The prohibition is focused on industrial operations, processes, and areas. It is not intended to apply to office workers.

There are many references in AFI 91-203 that prohibit jewelry some are:

4.11.6. Material handlers shall not wear finger rings, jewelry (which includes watches) or loose clothing, and shall keep long hair completely covered when around moving conveyor belts, open rotating shafts or other moving parts of machinery. Refer to Chapter 9, Jewelry, for additional guidance on wear of jewelry.

7.4.6.8. Remove hand jewelry (rings) prior to climbing.

8.8. Restrictions. While working on or around live electrical equipment, workers are prohibited from wearing garments with exposed metallic fasteners or flammable articles such as celluloid cap visors. Additionally, clothing shall be of the material necessary to comply with NFPA 70E, Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace, requirements. Articles such as jewelry, earrings, rings, hair fasteners, bracelets, key chains or metallic ID (dog) tags with metal chains shall also be removed and metal framed eyeglasses shall be secured by a band or cord to prevent them from falling into energized electrical circuits or machinery. Note: It's best practice to wear nonmetallic eyeglasses and neck lanyards (i.e., ID cardholders) with a breakaway band or cord to prevent them from falling into energized electrical circuits or moving industrial machinery.

8.18.2.7. Plant maintenance workers shall wear electric hazard (EH) rated safety-toe shoes and other PPE, such as safety goggles, hard hat and gloves, based on the specific tasks involved. Personnel shall remove jewelry before working on machinery. Metal eyeglasses shall be secured by a non-metallic band or cord to prevent them from falling into energized electrical circuits. Consult BE and the installation Ground Safety office on questions pertaining to PPE. Refer to Chapter 14 for additional information.

8.19.10. Do workers remove jewelry, such as rings, earrings, bracelets and watches, and secure metal framed eyeglasses with a band or cord when they work on or near live electrical equipment?

9.1. Finger Rings.

9.1.1. Recent mishap statistics reveal that finger injuries associated with rings are among the most frequent lost-time permanent partial injuries, with ring fingers catching on some object the most frequent cause. Because of the potential for serious injury, finger rings shall not be worn by personnel engaged in the following activities identified below. Note: This restriction applies to personnel actually performing these tasks on an infrequent basis. It is not intended to apply to administrative and support personnel assigned to or visiting these areas. However, personnel should comply with established and posted installation or unit safety precautions to prevent personal injury.

9.3. Jewelry in Industrial Areas. Workers shall not wear rings, earrings, bracelets, wristwatches or necklaces in the vicinity of operating machinery and power tools. While working on or around live electrical equipment or high temperature equipment, highly combustible garments, garments with exposed metallic fasteners or metal articles such as jewelry, earrings, rings, hair fasteners, bracelets or key chains shall not be worn, nor will flammable articles such as celluloid cap visors be worn. Metal eyeglasses shall be secured by a non-metallic band or cord to prevent them from falling into energized electrical circuits.

43.11.4.3.3. Do not wear jewelry or other materials that could trap spilled liquid against the skin.

As a side note, the manufacture states that "Our rings don't too well with exposure to gas, oil, grease, and other chemicals & corrosive substances. I am told that when exposed to oil & grease, you will see some corrosion of the ring & even breakage. Specifically, oil & grease reacts with the ring, and can become waterlogged and soggy!"

POC's for this matter are Mr. Robert Baker DSN: 263-2494 and Mr. Mark Kantorowicz DSN: 246-0826.