

Selecting The Right Technology For The Workplace

Before you can select the right technology for you or your workers, you must first consider several factors.

How much mobility is required on the job?

Will workers be operating machines while standing still or sitting? Or will they be fighting fires or doing heavy construction? Take a moment to consider the amount of physical mobility required of the workers.

Keep in mind that products that are umbilically attached or provide spot cooling allow very limited mobility.

Will workers need to wear protective gear over their cooling garments?

Not all types of cooling technologies work with all types of protective gear. For instance, umbilical-type cooling systems aren't appropriate for chemical suits, which require full enclosure. Neither are evaporative cooling systems, since there's no movement of air and humidity is high within the suits.

You'll also need to consider how long workers will need to stay cool without interruption, keeping in mind that passive technologies can't be recharged without removing the suit.



How long between breaks?

Simply put, what is the cooling duration you'll need? Remember, passive systems must be recharged periodically. In addition, a freezer, refrigerator, ice water, or a special plug-in charger needs to be handy throughout the workday. Before selecting a technology, check how long it will provide cooling between recharges, what device is needed to recharge, and how long a recharge takes. If extremely long continuous cooling is required, your only options are spot coolers and umbilical types.

How hot and humid is the workplace?

The temperature range and humidity affect the duration and use of cooling technologies. In fact, high humidity renders certain products virtually useless.