

Reminder Regarding Hockey Helmet Certification and BNQ-Certified Neck Protectors

This is an important reminder regarding certification requirements for hockey helmets and neck protectors as well as the application of stickers on a CSA-certified hockey helmet.

As stated in the Hockey Canada Playing Rules (Rule 3.6(b)), all players, including goaltenders, are required to wear a **CSA-certified helmet, to which a CSA-certified facial protector must be securely attached and not altered in any way.**

There are many types of helmets and face protectors that exist for many different sports, and some are CSA-certified while others may not be certified. In addition, some helmets and face protectors may look similar to the CSA-certified hockey helmets and face protectors but are in fact not CSA-certified. When purchasing a helmet or face protector for hockey, it is very important to ensure that the product is CSA-certified as outlined in Rule 3.6(b). It is also important to note that the CSA sticker (Figure B) should not be removed from the helmet and needs to be visible during play.

There is also ongoing confusion over the HECC certification sticker (Figure A) on hockey helmets sold in Canada because they bear an expiration date. This expiration date is related only to the length of certification granted by HECC for a given helmet and is not an indication of the lifespan of a hockey helmet. HECC-certified hockey helmets are mandated for players playing under the jurisdiction of USA Hockey. The HECC certification sticker does not apply in Canada.

The only certification sticker that should be verified for play under the jurisdiction of Hockey Canada is the CSA certification sticker on the helmet. There is currently no expiration on CSA certification and the date on the CSA sticker represents the year the helmet was manufactured.

The lifespan of a hockey helmet is not easy to determine. Many factors, including the amount and type of use, care and maintenance, storage, etc., determine a hockey helmet's lifespan. Participants should exercise good judgment as to the suitability of a hockey helmet for play. Helmets that are cracked, have loose fittings or missing liner pieces, or that have been subjected to a severe impact should be replaced.

For a hockey helmet to function effectively, it must be in very good working order and worn properly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

This is also a reminder that, as per Rule 3.6(f), the wearing of a **BNQ-certified** neck protector is compulsory for players registered in minor and female hockey. It is important when purchasing a neck protector that it contains the BNQ certification logo on the product (Figure C).

For complete wording of Rule 3.6 and important information regarding equipment, please refer to the following resources:

- Hockey Canada Playing Rules – https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Officiating/Downloads/rulebook_casebook_e.pdf
- Hockey Canada Equipment Fitting Guide (Page 65) – https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Safety/Insurance/Downloads/safety_teamwork_e.pdf

FIGURE A
Sample HECC Sticker (Helmets)



Expiry of HECC Certification

FIGURE B
Sample CSA Sticker (Helmets)



Date helmet was manufactured

FIGURE C
BNQ Logo (Throat Protectors)



Application of Stickers on Helmets

Prior to applying anything to the helmet, including stickers, players should refer to the helmet manufacturer's instructions and the sticker product specifications to confirm that the type of adhesive they are applying will not jeopardize CSA certification and/or the manufacturer's warranty. It is the sole responsibility of the equipment user to ensure they are not applying adhesives or other materials that may affect the integrity of the helmet and ultimately void the CSA certification and/or manufacturer's warranty. Any new stickers applied to the helmet may not cover the CSA sticker.

Stickers on Helmets – Important Reminders

- **The CSA sticker must always remain on the helmet and must not be covered by any other stickers.**
- It is recommended that you do not apply anything to the helmet. However, if the user decides to apply materials such as stickers, it is their responsibility to ensure it meets approval of the helmet manufacturer.
- It is important that the manufacturer instructions for care of the helmet are carefully read and followed to ensure proper maintenance.
- Officials are NOT to make any decision with regards to the application of stickers on helmets and its effect on CSA certification however, no other alterations of the helmet or face protector are permitted.

Stickers on Helmets – Question & Answers

- **Why do some adhesives affect the helmet integrity?**
 - Some glues create an exothermic reaction, which can alter the molecular composition of the plastic, therefore reducing its strength and protection.
- **How quickly can adhesive affect the helmet?**
 - This depends on many factors, including how much the helmet is worn and what material the helmet is made of.
- **Could a unique mark be used to identify stickers that are safe to apply to the hockey helmet?**
 - Unfortunately, this is not a realistic solution; it would be very difficult to mark small stickers, such as numbers. The other problem is that the mark could be copied and applied to stickers that are not suitable. This type of situation would be difficult to enforce.
- **Is there another way to affix stickers, instead of glue?**
 - With other application methods, helmets often get wet, which would cause the stickers to fall off.
- **If a specific manufacturer approves a sticker to be applied to their helmet, does this mean the sticker may be applied to a helmet from another manufacturer?**
 - No, the approval from one manufacturer does not mean that the sticker can be applied to all helmets. Approval must be sought from the manufacturer of the specific helmet.