

Personal Protective Equipment

# Staying Dry & Stylish: Understanding Rain Gear & Outerwear Garment Categories

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MCR Safety began manufacturing rain gear during the 1980s under the company name of River City. Founded in 1983, River City merged with two other companies, Memphis Gloves and Crews Glasses, to create MCR Safety in 2004.

They're set apart from their competitors by having one of the ***broadest rain gear lines*** in the industrial market. They cater to wearers seeking high-end designs, mid-tier options, and competitively priced styles. In contrast, most industrial ***personal protective equipment*** (PPE) companies only stock one or two tiers, and MCR Safety stocks all three! Their product line ranges from styles designed for chemical resistance to those offering warmth to high-visibility options. You'll find rain gear offered as single-use ponchos, high-end breathable jackets, and stretchable options that let you move freely so you can still get the job done. Most importantly, their rain gear is designed to keep you dry, allowing you to stay comfortable and protected in the elements.

Nobody enjoys becoming drenched by rain, especially when it's cold outside. This article highlights the different coatings available on MCR's rainwear and then jumps directly into the specific raingear categories. Read on to learn more and let's get you out of the rain, or at least protected from it.

## Commercial, Industrial, Safety, and Sports

MCR Safety caters primarily to those needing ***work rain gear***, however, their products are also worn across many facets of everyday life. Rain gear is a type of protection everyone needs, whether you're headed out into nature camping, adventuring on the boat, or riding a motorcycle. Here are some more leisure activities people may need rain gear for:

- ATV Riding
- Backpacking
- Biking
- Cycling
- Golf
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Hunting
- Running

In commercial and industrial work settings, anyone riding to work in the rain always needs protection. In addition, rain gear is often used by those employed in agriculture, airports, carpenters, commercial fishing, construction, EMS, forestry, food processing, logging, long-haul driving, mining, oil and gas, police, sailors, theme parks, and utilities. ***Rain gear*** for tree work is one area that relies heavily upon work rain gear, as it always involves unpredictable weather. Essentially, safety work rain gear is worn across numerous industries and occupations. And, those in southern states must always have their rain gear nearby.



MCR Safety's highest quality rain gear, the UT38JH rain jacket, breathes, flexes, and comes with enhanced zippers and sealing.

And MCR Safety rain gear offers enhanced protection from more than just rain. Those involved in chemical processing can also use their rain gear to protect them from numerous industrial chemicals.

## Waterproof Basics

What is rainwear? The *short answer* is that it's a waterproof or water-resistant garment. A *rain jacket* or another piece of clothing is considered "waterproof" when its water resistance is high enough to repel a driving rain. While the exact testing standard and qualifications can be debated, waterproof gear keeps you dry even when it's pouring.

Within *MCR Safety's product lineup*, any product with a PVC coating will be waterproof. This might include a poncho, coat, or suit. However, items tested to ASTM F903 offer the most significant waterproof protection, as they're designed to hold up against specific chemicals as well and can protect wearers from liquid splash hazards.



The ASTM F903 test method provides users insight into a garment's liquid penetration performance.

While **waterproof rain gear** can help protect from the elements, it can become hot or cumbersome as it doesn't breathe well. On the other hand, water-resistant gear can cope with light rain over a brief time and provide better breathability. Water-resistant gear can be overwhelmed in torrential or sustained heavy rain and winds. However, it would be best to balance the waterproof protection you need with the overall quality, cost, and comfort level you expect. This is why MCR Safety offers such a wide range of options: it all comes down to the different qualities offered in different garments.

## Top Rated Materials and Polymers

Most rain gear looks similar, but not all are created equal. Rain gear can be made using various coatings and materials, allowing for different quality levels, features, and applications. It's important to know what to expect from each.

The most crucial part of any rain attire is knowing the coating used on the garment. Below is a breakdown of the polymer coatings used in **MCR Safety's rain gear**.

### Polyvinyl Chloride

You are probably familiar with PVC rainwear, even if you don't recognize it by name. PVC is often thought of as the classic fisherman's yellow rainwear. It's the most recognized polymer used for manufacturing raingear. Since it's a robust and versatile polymer, it provides good overall waterproof performance. PVC, often called "vinyl," affords less breathability, however. Most of MCR's mid-tier options feature PVC.

### Polyurethane

PU, or polyurethane-coated rain gear, provides the wearer with a thinner, more stretchable material designed to be more lightweight and comfortable. Don't let the comfort fool you; it's still highly durable, and most of MCR's high-end styles feature a PU coating.

Wearing PU is also advantageous because it doesn't look or feel like plastic.

## Neoprene

Created by DuPont® scientists, the neoprene polymer is a synthetic rubber known for toughness, flexibility, and the ability to remain adaptable over various temperatures. Neoprene is resilient, offering better abrasion and puncture resistance than PVC, and when combined with a nylon backing, it makes it one of MCR Safety's most durable rain protection offerings. The added abrasion-resistant qualities are excellent for holding up against the scuffs and scratches from rough working job sites.

Most wet suits are neoprene, demonstrating this polymer's toughness for making rain gear. MCR Safety's best chemical-resistant and durable option features a neoprene coating.

## Polyethylene

A thermoplastic material that is widely used for temporary protection, specifically within MCR's ponchos.

Regarding the thickness of their polymer coatings, the most common weight found across their rain gear lineup is .35mm. However, some poncho styles come in at .02mm, and some thicker styles reach .50 mm. Most of the finished coatings are eventually bound and laminated to a backing, a fabric that provides comfort and support. Knitted stretch polyester, polyester, and nylon are three of the most common backings

*Previously Featured on MCR Safety's blog.*