



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Protect your Eyesight

In just the blink of an eye, an incident can injure or even blind a worker who is not wearing proper protective eyewear. The type of eye protection--safety glasses, goggles, face shields, or helmets must meet the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z87.1. In hazardous workplaces, streetwear eyeglasses should only be worn in conjunction with ANSI-approved additional cover protection.

Every day an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces. No matter where we work, flying particles, dusts, splashes, or flying objects are apt to expose us to potential eye injury. Fortunately, we can protect against these hazards by using the appropriate protective eyewear for our jobs.

A survey by the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of about 1,000 minor eye injuries reveals how and why many on-the-job accidents occur:

- Not wearing eye protection--BLS reports that nearly three out of every five workers injured were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident.
- Wearing the wrong kind of eye protection for the job--about 40 of the injured workers were wearing some form of eye protection when the accident occurred. These workers were most likely to be wearing eyeglasses with no side shields, though injuries among employees wearing full-cup or flat-fold side shields occurred as well.

Eye safety requirement signs should be posted for anyone entering a work area that requires industrial-quality eye protection. Warning signs should be placed near machines, equipment, and process areas that require specific eye protection.

Eye injuries can be reduced when workers are trained to recognize the eye hazard they may encounter and to use and care for eye protection equipment properly. Workers in hazardous areas should also know what to do in case of an eye injury. In all eye injury cases, professional medical attention should be sought as soon as possible after taking initial first-aid measures

Eye Hazards:

There are four types of particles that can cause eye injuries on the job.

1. Unidentified flying objects: These microscopic objects consist of dust and particles floating around in the air, generated by wind, equipment, or cleaning operations. When working in dusty conditions, wear eye protection. Even a small speck in the eye can lead to trouble.

2. Particles resulting from chipping, grinding, sawing, brushing, hammering, or using power tools: These particles move at an amazing speed and strike with the force of a bullet. Wear eye protection any time over-head operations are performed. It may be advisable on some jobs to wear safety goggles under a full-face shield.
3. Invisible hazards: You can't see the injurious light rays generated by welding operations or laser beams. And their effects often are not felt until hours later. Wear the eye protection required when using such equipment. And if you happen to be working nearby, don't look in the direction of welding arcs or where a laser beam is being used.
4. Liquids: Hot liquids, such as tar or asphalt, solvents, paint, and solutions for cleaning masonry or metal can cause serious eye injury if splashed in your face. The use of proper eye protection, possibly a full-face shield, is essential when transferring liquids between containers and when using caustic or acid cleaners.

Need for Protection:

Preventing eye injuries from flying objects and splashes is – or should be – relatively easy. Eye protection is not “high tech,” and it's readily available. Yet thousands of workers suffer eye injuries each year because they don't wear proper eye protection when conditions clearly call for it.

Here are the most common types of eye protection:

Safety glasses – These protect from flying objects and splashes approaching from the front. They also have side shields to protect from the side or eyecups to add protection from the top and bottom. Safety glasses can be prescription or non-prescription and are made with the lenses and frames tough enough to withstand a hard blow.

Goggles – These add protection from dust and sparks. They may be cushioned for a better fit, and they are usually ventilated, directly or indirectly, to allow air to circulate.

Face shields and helmets – These are designed to protect the entire face, or entire head, and are often tinted to protect against intense light. However, workers using helmets or face shields should also wear safety glasses underneath to provide protection when the outer equipment is removed.

What Not to Use:

There are several important notes of caution about eye protection.

- Don't substitute regular glasses for safety glasses. They may look the same, but regular glasses are not hard enough to resist a hard blow, even with shatterproof lenses, that could result in part of the lens or frame being pushed into the eye.
- Don't wear metal-framed eye protection in areas where there may be an electrical hazard. Metal, of course, conducts electricity, so accidental contact between the frame and an energized power source could mean a real tragedy.
- Don't wear contact lenses in conditions that expose you to heavy dust, vapors, or splashes.

Making the Most of Eye Protection:

Eye protectors are only as good as they fit. A poor fit is not only uncomfortable, but it also defeats the purpose of wearing the protection – to keep objects and splashes away from the eyes. Poor-fitting eye protection should be replaced. Eye and face protectors will fit better, and last longer if they are cared for properly.

Proper care includes:

- Before each wearing, check for bent or damaged frames, scratched lenses, and loose or damaged headbands.
- After each wearing, wash gently in warm soapy water, rinsing thoroughly, and air-drying.
- Store in a clean, dust-proof case.

Your eyesight is a precious gift. Please do not wait too long to come to your senses, if your work presents an exposure to eye hazards, wear your eye protection.

Summary:

When choosing "safety glasses" the primary consideration is to ensure that the glasses provide necessary impact protection and that they meet or exceed the ANSI Z87.1-1989 standard. Both frame and lens must meet this standard. The idea is to prevent flying and splashing objects from penetrating the lens or entering your eye.

Damage to your sight is nothing to fool around with.

EYES ARE PRICELESS...EYE PROTECION IS CHEAP!!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

<i>Supervisor:</i>	<i>Subject:</i>
<i>Location:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Conducted By:</i>	<i>Trainer Signature:</i>

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests

