

Eye Safety At Work

Is Everyone's Business.



Preventing Work-Related Eye Injuries

Each day, about 2,000 U.S. workers receive medical treatment because of eye injuries sustained at work. Workplace injury is a leading cause of eye trauma, vision loss, disability, and blindness, and can interfere with your ability to perform your job and carry out normal activities.

Employers and workers need to be aware of the risks to sight, especially if they work in high-risk occupations. High-risk occupations include construction, manufacturing, mining, carpentry, auto repair, electrical work, plumbing, welding, and maintenance. The combination of removing or minimizing eye safety hazards and wearing proper eye safety protection can prevent many eye injuries.

Personal protective eyewear such as safety glasses with side shields, goggles, face shields, and/or welding helmets can protect you from common hazards, including flying fragments, large chips, hot sparks, optical radiation, splashes from molten metals, objects, particles, and glare. The risk of eye injury and the need for preventive measures depend on your job and the conditions in your workplace.

Employers can take several precautions to make the work environment as safe as possible and help reduce the risk of visual impairment and blindness caused by injury:

- Conduct an eye-hazard assessment
- Remove or reduce all eye hazards where possible
- Provide appropriate safety eye protection for the types of hazards at the worksite
- Require all employees in hazardous situations to wear the appropriate eye protection
- Keep eye protection in good condition and assist workers with attaining the proper fit
- Keep bystanders out of work areas and/or behind protective barriers
- Use caution flags to identify potential hazards such as hanging or protruding objects
- Provide emergency sterile eyewash solutions/stations near hazardous areas
- Post first-aid instructions and information on how to get emergency aid.

Eye safety should receive continuing attention in workplace educational programs. Procedures for handling eye injuries should also be established and reinforced.

Workers should have a comprehensive dilated eye examination on a regular basis (typically every 2 years) to help ensure good eye health. Maintaining healthy vision is important to avoiding injuries on the job.

Make vision a health priority, because eye safety at work is everyone's business.

