



Eye Safety

Did you know?

- There are about 2000 eye injuries that occur at work every day in the US.
- Particles of dust, wood, drywall, cement are the most common source of eye injuries to carpenters.
- Even “minor” eye injuries can cause life-long vision problems.

March is “Save Your Vision” month and the American Optometric Association is working to educate the public to avoid digital eye strain.

Potential Hazards at Work

- Projectiles: Dust, Concrete, metal and wood
- Chemicals: Splashes and fumes
- Radiation: Visible light, UV Radiation, and lasers
- Bloodborne Pathogens: Blood and Body Fluids
- Computer Vision Syndrome (Digital Eye Strain): a group of vision related problems that result from prolonged computer, tablet, e-reader and cell phone use.

How to Protect Your Eyes

- Nonprescription and Prescription Safety Glasses: typically look like normal glasses but are made of stronger lenses and frames.
- Goggles: Provide protection from impact, dust and chemical splashes. Also, provide a secure shield around the eyes.
- Face Shields and Helmets: Face Shields are to protect workers exposed to chemicals, heat or bloodborne pathogens. This should not be the only PPE worn, safety glasses/goggles should also be worn.
- Special Protection: Helmets or goggles with special filters should be worn to protect the eyes from optical radiation exposure.

What Should be Done in an Eye Emergency?

Chemicals in the Eye:

- o Immediately flush the eye with water for at least 15 mins. And if wearing contacts remove them.
- o Do not bandage the eye or try to neutralize the chemical with other substances.
- o Immediately seek medical attention after flushing.
- Particles in the Eye:
 - o Do not rub the eye. Try to let your tears wash out the speck, or irrigate the eye with artificial tears.
 - o Try lifting the upper eyelid out and down over the lower eyelid to remove the particles.
 - o If the particle does not wash out, keep the eye closed, bandage lightly and seek medical care.
- Blows to the Eye:
 - o Gently apply a cool compress without putting pressure on the eye.
 - o If causing severe pain or reduced vision, seek immediate medical care.
- Cuts or Punctures to the Eye or Eyelid:
 - o Do not wash out the eye or attempt to remove the object.
 - o Cover the eye with a rigid shield (ex. Bottom of a paper cup.)
 - o Seek immediate medical attention.

