



Eye Injury Prevention

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Newsletter Spotlight

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In construction, more than 10,000 eye injuries happen each year that force workers to miss work or worse. There are many things that employees can do to mitigate injuries to the eye.

There is always potential for an eye injury at the work site. Flying particles from grinding, chiseling, sawing, etc. can cause serious eye injury. There is also the hazard of getting harmful liquids or even spray paint in your eyes. Many times, hazards are created by coworkers or even another trade. You can't possibly do your work and know what every other person around you is doing at all times. It is best to wear eye protection to be sure your eyes are safe.

There are several different types of eye protection that you should be aware of. Ordinary eyeglasses or sunglasses are NOT designed to properly protect your eyes. On impact, regular lenses tend to shatter, resulting in serious eye injury. Safety lenses are designed to withstand heavy

impacts. You can get prescription safety glasses through your regular eye doctor. There are also other types of eye protection designed, including goggles and full-face shields, depending on the type of work being performed.

Contact lenses should never be worn anyplace there is a chance of foreign matter, especially harmful liquids, entering the eyes. Such things can get trapped under a contact lens, even before flushed with water, and cause damage. You may prefer to wear contacts, but it's not worth exposing yourself to a potential injury.

By wearing appropriate eye protection, you should be able to avoid injuries to you eyes. However, there is still a possibility that you or those around you might need eye first aid. Listed below are a few points to remember in case of an eye injury:

- Avoid rubbing the eye, this may force the particle deeper into the tissue. Wash hands before examining the eye, this will help prevent infection.
- Do not attempt to remove a particle that is embedded in the eye, you can cause serious damage. Place clean, preferably sterile, patches over both eyes and get a physician as soon as possible.
- In case of an acid burn on the eye, rinse the eye for at least 10 minutes with clean water, get medical help as soon as possible.
- Periodic eye examinations are a must. This is often the only way people learn that their vision is defective. Many times vision will gradually get worse from one year to the next and go unnoticed. Remember, your eyes are an extremely important asset to your livelihood.

WELDING:

For a **welding hood**, the number of the filter lens shade and the company that made it must be marked.

IF YOU WORK NEAR A WELDING JOB

OSHA says there must be a flameproof screen to shield against UV rays around a welder to protect other people. You can get welder's flash (burns) in your eyes. Do not look at the welding arc — or reflections of the arc — unless you wear a welding hood with the same lens as the welder's.

Filter lens shades for welding and flame cutting					
3 things affect the lens number you need:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Intensity of radiant energy produced by the work					
<input type="checkbox"/> Background lighting (indoor or outdoor work)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Type of filter lens (standard or reflective).*					
You can always use a darker lens (a higher number).					
Minimum standard lens shade number needed:					
Type of work	Indoors	Outdoors	Type of work	Indoors	Outdoors
Torch soldering	2	2	*Gas tungsten arc welding	11	10
Torch brazing	9	2	*Plasma arc welding	11	10
Flame cutting	4	3	*Plasma arc cutting	11	10
Gas welding	5	4	*Air/carbon arc cutting	12	11
*Gas metal arc welding	11	10	*Flux core welding	12	11
*Shielded metal arc welding	11	10			
*Numbers are for standard filter lens. If reflective lens is used, it's OK to use one number lower: So, for shielded metal arc welding indoors, you can use reflective lens 10.					
Source: Safety and Health Department, United Association.					