



# HEALTH ALERT!



## Keeping an Eye On Eye Protection

More than 2,000 workplace eye injuries occur EVERY DAY in the United States. A vast majority of employers provide eye protection at no cost to their employees, however 94% of eyewear being used by workers is not appropriate for the job being done and about 40% of the workers receive no eye safety training on where and what type of eyewear should be used.



“90% of occupational eye injuries could have been prevented if the victim was wearing proper eye and face protection”  
(Prevent Blindness America)



The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 36,680 non-fatal work-related eye injuries occurred in private industry workplaces in 2004 at an estimated expense of \$300 million in lost production time, medical expenses, and worker’s compensation costs.

### Fast Facts on Eye Injuries

- ✓ 69% of all reported facial injuries occurred to the eye.
- ✓ Nearly 70% of non-fatal eye injuries were caused by flying or falling objects or sparks striking the eye.
- ✓ Males 25-44 years of age are at highest risk for eye injuries.
- ✓ The majority of eye injuries occur in welders, cutters, solderers and braziers, followed by construction laborers.

### Eye Protection Safety Plan

- ✓ Engineering Controls ~ Machine guarding, welding curtains, appropriate visible signage.
- ✓ Administrative Controls ~ Prohibit access to work zones for non-workers and workers without proper safety equipment.
- ✓ Personal Protective Equipment ~ Use of fitted, job specific, ANSI certified protective eyewear and facewear.
- ✓ Cleaning & Maintenance ~ Ensure proper cleaning of lens and face shields with appropriate materials and store properly to prevent damage.

### Eye and Face Protection Devices for Specific Hazards\*

#### Hazards

#### Protective Devices

Impact & Flying Objects

Safety glasses with side protectors or goggles

Light & Radiation

Welding helmets or welding face shields with the appropriate shade number, glasses with shaded or special-purpose lens

Dust

Goggles ~ cover-type or eyecup

Heat

Face shield, goggles, safety glasses with side protectors

Chemicals & Caustic Hazards

Goggles ~ cover-type, eyecup, and face shield

\*A hazard assessment for each task should be performed prior to the use of any personal protective equipment. Adequate protection against the highest level of each hazard should be provided. Face shields should always be worn over primary eye protection (glasses or goggles). Persons whose vision requires prescription lenses must take further precautions as required by OSHA standards. Protective devices do not provide unlimited protection and are not an appropriate substitute for engineering, administrative or other controls.



## An Eye Saved

As the result of a contractor's safety glasses program, an employee began encouraging his eighteen year-old son, who installs siding on houses, to wear safety glasses while working. About one week later, he was applying siding with an air powered staple gun. When he fired a staple, it hit a metal plate behind the siding. The staple ricocheted back towards his face and one leg of the staple penetrated the safety glasses' lens, (see figure below).

**The staple hit with such force that the frame of the glasses cracked and he received bruising on the eyebrow and cheekbone, however his eye was left undamaged.**



**The use of safety glasses saved his sight and possibly his life.**

### The following resources will provide you with information on OSHA Standards and assist you in preventing eye injuries in your workplace:

United States Department of Labor. *Eye and Face Protection Standards 1910.133 and 1926.102*  
<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/eyefaceprotection/standards.html>

United States Department of Labor. *Eye and Face Protection eTool*.  
<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/eyeandface/index.html>

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. *Eye Safety Toolbox Talk - Instructor's Guide*.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/eye/toolbox-eye.html>

United States Department of Labor. *Non-mandatory Compliance Guidelines for Hazard Assessment and Personal Protective Equipment Selection - 1910 Subpart I, Appendix B*.  
[http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=STANDARDS&p\\_id=10120](http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=10120)

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