

Tool Box Talk

EYE PROTECTION


March 2011

Every day in Canada, 200 workers sustain on-the-job eye injuries. The vast majority of them are preventable by using proper eyewear and following safety measures.

Most industrial eye injuries can be prevented by wearing the right protection on the job. Protective eyewear includes:

- Non-prescription and prescription safety glasses
- Goggles
- Face shields
- Welding helmets
- Full-face respirators

Whatever the protection, it is important to properly maintain and store it, to ensure shelf life and to maximize protection. Here are some other things to keep in mind when it comes to safety eyewear:

- Always wear protective eyewear that was specifically designed for the task at hand.
- Keep your safety glasses on even when you wear other protection like a welding helmet or face shield. Flying chips or dust can get under the shield if you lift the visor.
- Match your eye protection to the hazard: goggles that protect you from dust may not protect you from splashes or radiation.
- Clean lenses with water or a lens-cleaning solution to float dirt away, rather than scratching it into the lens.
- Look for the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) mark on safety eyewear. This stamp ensures that it meets or exceeds existing CSA safety standards. 
- Make sure the equipment fits properly. It should be snug but not uncomfortable.
- Never tamper with your equipment.
- Inspect plastic visors or protectors for scratches that may limit vision or cracks that can weaken the structural strength.
- Choose eye protection with polycarbonate lenses. Polycarbonate is impact and scratch resistant. Polycarbonate lenses are better at transmitting light and providing clear vision, and they are the thinnest and lightest lenses available.
- Always keep a spare pair of protective eyewear handy, just in case.

Workers should wear safety eyewear whenever there is a chance of eye injury. In addition, anyone visiting or passing through areas that pose eye hazards should wear protective eyewear. Contact lens wearers must be especially careful and should always wear protective eyewear on site: dust and other particles can become lodged under the lens and can cause irritations or infections. Workers who work in the sun or using equipment that exposes them to ultraviolet radiation should also use appropriate eye protection.

Source: www.cniib.ca, Eye Safety

FIT AND CARE

Fit

Ensure your safety glasses fit properly. Eye size, bridge size and temple length all vary. Safety glasses should be individually assigned and fitted. Wear safety glasses so that the temples fit comfortably over the ears. The frame should be as close to the face as possible and adequately supported by the bridge of the nose.

Care

Safety glasses need maintenance. Clean your safety glasses daily. Follow the manufacturer's instructions. Avoid rough handling that can scratch lenses. Scratches impair vision and can weaken lenses. Store your safety glasses in a clean, dry place where they cannot fall or be stepped on. Keep them in a case when they are not being worn. Replace scratched, pitted, broken, bent or ill-fitting glasses. Damaged glasses interfere with vision and do not provide protection. Replace damaged parts only with identical parts from the original manufacturer to ensure the same safety rating.

Source: www.ccohs.ca



Occupational Health and Safety Regulations State:

Eye and face protectors

93 (1) Where there is a risk of irritation or injury to the face or eyes of a worker from flying objects or particles, splashing liquids, molten metal or ultraviolet, visible or infrared radiation, an employer or contractor shall provide industrial eye or face protectors and require the worker to use them.

(2) Where an industrial eye or face protector is required by these regulations to be provided or used, the industrial eye or face protector must be approved.

(3) An employer or contractor shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that a worker does not perform electric arc welding if another worker may be exposed to radiation from the arc, unless the other worker is using a suitable industrial eye protector or is protected from the radiation by a suitable screen.

(4) A worker shall not perform electric arc welding if another worker may be exposed to radiation from the arc, unless the other worker is using a suitable industrial eye protector or is protected from the radiation by a suitable screen.

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SASKATCHEWAN
CONSTRUCTION SAFETY
ASSOCIATION

REGINA OFFICE | 498 HENDERSON DRIVE | REGINA SK S4N 6E3 | T: 306.525.0175 | F: 306.525.1542
SASKATOON OFFICE | 2606 KOYL AVENUE | SASKATOON SK S7L 5X9 | T: 306.652.0907 | F: 306.652.0923

WWW.SCSAONLINE.CA

