



USARPAC Safety Gram



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Eye Injuries Occur in an Instant

An eye injury can happen in an instant, but the results can last for the rest of your life. Think what it would be like to be blinded in a workplace accident, just because you decided not to put on your eye protection. You would regret the decision for the rest of your life.

A seemingly minor burn or a cut can be disastrous when it involves your eyes. A piece of metal flying off a grinder might be barely noticed if it strikes another part of your body. But if it strikes your eye it could cause permanent vision impairment. A chemical splash on your skin might cause a painful burn but it may eventually heal. If that splash went into your eyes, you might never see again.



The eyes are subjected to many kinds of dangers at work; here are just some of them:

- ◆ Small particles in the air
- ◆ Projectiles, from processes such as grinding and cutting
- ◆ Blows and impact
- ◆ Cuts
- ◆ Vapors
- ◆ Hot or molten material
- ◆ Splashes of chemical substances such as corrosives
- ◆ Certain light rays such as those from welding or LASERS
- ◆ Excessive sunlight

These injuries can be prevented, by working safely and wearing the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the eyes. Protective eyewear can be prescription or non-prescription. Lenses can be designed to protect against specific hazards such as impact, heat, or infrared/ultraviolet light radiation. Side shields will help to provide greater protection from flying particles and molten metal burns.

Your eyewear should fit well and be comfortable to wear. A full range of eye, bridge, and temple sizes should be available. Your eye protection should not cause headaches, slip off easily, or fog up. Most manufacturers now carry at least two sizes of goggles, face shields, and other special equipment to accommodate workers. The form of eye protection you choose will depend upon the activity and degree of the hazard involved.

Here are some of the basic types of eye protection:

- ◆ **Safety Glasses.** Safety glasses have impact resistant glass, plastic or polycarbonate lenses, and safety frames designed to prevent the lenses from being pushed into your eyes upon impact. Standard safety glasses offer basic protection from jobs where a hazard may strike you from in front. When equipped with side shields or cups additional protection is given where a hazard may come from the front, side, above or below. Tinted lenses provide protection from radiation hazards.
- ◆ **Safety Goggles.** Goggles, also impact resistant and available in tinted lenses, provide a secure shield around the entire eye area and give protection against hazards coming from many directions. They are used in sawing, soldering and when using chemicals. Goggles with indirect ventilation may be required if you are exposed to splash hazards.
- ◆ **Shields and Helmets.** Face shields and helmets alone are not protective eyewear. They are frequently used in conjunction with safety glasses or goggles for chemicals, heat or radiation hazards. Helmets are most commonly used when welding or working with molten materials.



Never lose sight of the importance of eye protection. Obtain the correct safety eye wear, and remember to wear it.