

Safetyline

Apartment Association of Michigan

Member Benefits
Membership in the Apartment Association carries benefits beyond savings on Work Comp insurance. Members join a network of their peers; thus gaining access to information sharing and the tools needed for effective loss control.

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Apartment Association of Michigan

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Workplace Eye Safety; Think Of Protective Eyewear As 'Cool Shades'

Editor's Note: We encourage all of our members to use this information as a starting point for effective safety communication. Members should add to it based on their safety needs and work environments.

Why is eye safety at work important?

Here's the puzzler: Why will people spend \$10 or \$12 at the drugstore on sunglasses, but not wear safety glasses at work? Don't think too hard. The answer is people don't think safety glasses are "cool." Yet, eye injuries in the workplace are very common. More than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work

each day. About 10 percent of the injuries require one or more missed workdays for recovery. Of the total amount of work-related injuries, 10 to 20 percent will cause temporary or permanent vision loss.

Ironically, wearing the correct safety glasses is one of the easiest work place safety steps anybody can take. You just put them on. In addition, while they may not resemble the "shades" of a favorite celebrity, experts say that the right eye protection could have lessened the severity or even prevented 90 percent of accidental eye injuries. How

"cool" is that?

It's come a long way

Manufacturers are, in fact, catching on to the "cool" factor in motivating people to protect their eyes.

Protective eyewear has evolved dramatically over the years. In the 1960s, standard safety glasses were worn mainly in industry and made of tempered glass with unattractive frame styles.

But since then, a merge between safety glasses and sunglasses has made eyewear more protective and fashionable.

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First Aid For Eye Emergencies

Editor's Note: While the below represents tried and true first aid practices, the information should not be construed as medical advice.

Knowing what to do for an eye emergency can save valuable time and possibly prevent vision loss. Here are some instructions for basic eye injury first aid.

Be Prepared

- Wear eye protection for all hazardous activities and

sports-at school, home, and on the job.

- Stock a first aid kit with a rigid eye shield and commercial eyewash before an eye injury happens.

- DO NOT assume that any eye injury is harmless. When in doubt, see a doctor immediately.

Chemical Burns to the Eye

In all cases of eye contact with chemicals:

- Immediately flush the eye with water or any other drinkable liquid. Hold the eye under a faucet or shower, or pour water into the eye using a clean container. Keep the eye open and as wide as possible while flushing. Continue flushing for at least 15 minutes.

- DO NOT use an eyecup.
- If a contact lens is in the

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First Aid

eye, begin flushing over the lens immediately. This may wash away the lens.

- DO NOT bandage the eye.
- Seek immediate medical treatment after flushing.

Specks in the Eye

- DO NOT rub the eye.
- Try to let tears wash the speck out or use an eyewash.
- Try lifting the upper eyelid outward and down over the lower lid.
- If the speck does not wash out, keep the eye closed, bandage it lightly, and see a doctor.

Blows to the Eye

- Apply a cold compress without putting pressure on the eye. Crushed ice in a plastic bag can be taped to the forehead to rest gently on

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the injured eye.

- In cases of pain, reduced vision, or discoloration (black eye), seek emergency medical care. Any of these symptoms could mean internal eye damage.

Cuts and Punctures of the Eye or Eyelid

- DO NOT wash out the eye with water or any other liquid.
- DO NOT try to remove an object that is stuck in the eye.
- Cover the eye with a rigid shield without applying pressure. The bottom half of a paper cup can be used.
- See a doctor at once.

Shades

There's a much wider selection of colors and styles to choose from. In fact, many sports and industry safety glasses are made with anything from sports team logos to zebra stripes on the frames. And instead of tempered glass, many lenses today are made of impact-resistant polycarbonate.

In terms of research to improve protective eyewear the process is ongoing. Work has been done over the years to perfect the features of protective eyewear. Now the job ahead is to educate people on how important it is to wear eye protection.

Common causes for eye injuries are:

- Flying objects (bits of metal, glass).
- Tools.
- Particles.
- Chemicals.
- Harmful radiation.
- Any combination of these or other hazards

What is my best defense against an eye injury?

Here are three important steps you can take:

- Know the eye safety dangers at work by completing an eye hazard assessment.
- Eliminate hazards before starting work. Use machine guarding, work screens, or other engineering controls.
- Use proper eye protection.

When should I protect my eyes at work?

You should wear safety eyewear whenever there is a chance of eye injury.

Anyone working in or passing through areas that pose eye hazards should wear protective eyewear.

What type of safety eyewear is available to me?

Safety eyewear protection includes:

- Non-prescription and prescription safety glasses.
- Goggles.
- Face shields including full-face respirators.
- Welding helmets.

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What type of safety eye protection should I wear?

- The type of safety eye protection you should wear depends on the hazards in your workplace.
- If you are working in an area that has particles, flying objects, or dust, you must at least wear safety glasses with side protection (side shields).
 - If you are working with chemicals, you should wear goggles.
 - If you are working near hazardous radiation (welding, lasers, or fiber optics) you must use special-purpose safety glasses, goggles, face shields, or helmets designed for that task.

What is the difference between glass, plastic, and polycarbonate safety lenses?

All three types of safety lenses meet or exceed the requirements for protecting your eyes.

Glass lenses

- Are not easily scratched.
- Can be used around harsh chemicals.
- Can be made in your corrective prescription.
- Are sometimes heavy and uncomfortable.

Plastic lenses

- Are lighter weight.
- Protect against welding splatter.
- Are not likely to fog.
- Are not as scratch-resistant as glass.

Polycarbonate lenses

- Are lightweight.
- Protect against welding splatter.
- Are not likely to fog.
- Are stronger than glass and plastic.
- Are more impact resistant than glass or plastic.
- Are not as scratch resistant as glass.



SAFETY MEETING

FOR THE APARTMENT INDUSTRY

COMPANY NAME _____ JOB NAME _____ DATE _____

LAUNCH 'COOL SAFETY SHADES' PROGRAM

- Inventory current supply of protective eyewear.
- Assess stock of protective eyewear for quality, specific use and general condition.
- Discard old eyewear that does not meet quality standards. Consider buying newer, more fashionable protective eyewear to encourage use by employees.
- Develop charts detailing what type of protective eyewear should be worn in the specific areas of your work environment.
- Check with your human resources or purchasing department to see if a vendor of protective eyewear can visit your facility and conduct an in-service meeting.
- Sponsor a "cool shades" safety day. The theme, of course, being "the eyes have it."
- Recruit and train first aid team leaders, so that they are well versed in helping triage eye injuries.
- Test the reality. Cover one eye and try to read this newsletter, or perform a familiar task. Appreciate that it only takes a moment to lose an eye.

SPECIAL TOPICS FOR YOUR PROJECT: _____

EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

Meeting attended by:

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Supervisor's Signature: _____

Fax this page to the head of your safety team

SAFETY SHORTS

The integrity of your safety program depends on prompt reporting of injuries and other on-the-job events. Keep the following information handy as an important reference tool.

Steps To Take In Filing A Claim:

Step 1: As soon as you are aware of an on-the-job injury or event, or any occupational disease, have the injured worker complete an Incident Report or provide a written summary of details that explain who was involved, what was involved, where the injury occurred, when it occurred, and why it occurred. Obtain the names of any witnesses.

Step 2: Provide the injured worker an Authority For Treatment form and direct them to the facility of your choice for the initial medical treatment. If needed, authorize emergency medical treatment. If hospitalization is required, you should make the proper arrangements and contact CMI to advise of the seriousness of the claim.

Following the initial medical treatment request the injured worker report back to his or her supervisor

with a physician's report. This report should provide necessary information to determine the length of disability, if any.

Step 3: Complete a Supervisor's Report Of Accident form.

Step 4: Complete one of two injury reports. Should an injury result in no lost time from work or no lost wages complete the Report of an Injury to Employee (For Less Than 7 Days Disability). This form should be sent to CMI within eight days of the reported claim.

If the injury is expected to result in disability/wage loss exceeding seven consecutive calendar days complete the Employer's Basic Report Of Injury. This form should be sent to CMI within 14 days of the reported claim.

Step 5: Mail or fax injury reports to CMI. Be sure to include the employee's incident report or written summary, the supervisor's report of accident, and the physician's report.

When mailing claims, or requesting forms, send to Citizens Management, Inc., P.O. Box 620, Howell, MI 48844-0620. Claims may be faxed to: 517/548-9246.



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