

## EYE PROTECTION - SEEING IS BELIEVING

In just the blink of an eye, an incident can injure or even blind a worker who is not wearing proper protective eyewear. The type of eye protection-safety glasses, goggles, face shields, or helmets must meet the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). In hazardous workplaces, streetwear eyeglasses should only be worn in conjunction with ANSI-approved additional cover protection.

Eye safety requirement signs should be posted for anyone entering a work area that requires industrial-quality eye protection. Warning signs should be placed near machines, equipment, or process areas that require specific eye protection.

Eye injuries can be reduced when workers are trained to recognize the eye hazard they may encounter and to use and care for eye protection equipment properly. Workers in hazardous areas should also know what to do in case of an eye injury. In all eye injury cases, professional medical attention should be sought as soon as possible after taking initial first-aid measures. There are several causes for eye injury:

- Foreign particles such as dust, dirt, metal, wood chips, even an eyelash can cause eye damage. These get into the eye from the wind or activities like chipping, grinding, sawing, brushing, hammering, or from power tools, equipment, and machinery. Flush the object out with water. Never rub or try to remove objects embedded in the eye. This can cause further damage. Loosely bandage eyes to stop movement then seek professional care.
- Chemical splashes from solvents, paints, hot liquids, or other hazardous solutions can cause great damage. Go immediately to the nearest emergency shower or water source. Look directly into the stream of water. With fingers hold eyes open and flush eyes for at least 15 minutes.
- Light burns can be caused from exposure to welding, lasers, or other radiant light. Their effect may not be felt until hours later when the eyes begin to feel gritty and become sensitive to light, then redness or swelling may occur. Keep eyes closed while awaiting medical attention.
- Bumps and blows to the eyes can be helped if a cold compress is applied for 15 minutes to reduce pain and swelling.
- Cuts in or around the eyes should be loosely bandaged to stop any eye movement until professionally attended. Don't rub, press, or wash the cut; this can cause further damage.

Eye safety is no accident. Nothing can replace the loss of an eye. Protect your eyesight from workplace hazards by wearing and caring for appropriate, approved protective eyewear. You'll see the difference.