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10 WAYS TO PREVENT OCCUPATIONAL EYE INJURIES

Good vision is priceless! Luckily, 90 % of all workplace eye injuries are preventable with the use of proper safety eyewear. Yet, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that workplace eye injuries cost over \$467 million a year. With indirect costs, such as legal fees, judgements and training new workers, the estimated total is more than \$934 million each year.

Nearly one million Americans have already lost some degree of sight due to an eye injury. With more than 700,000 work-related eye injuries happening each year, Americans can use a few tips on how to prevent eye injuries in the workplace.

ASSESS! Look carefully at plant operations. Inspect work areas, access routes and equipment. Study eye accident and injury reports. Identify operations and areas that present eye hazards.

TEST! Uncorrected vision problems can cause accidents. Use vision testing in your employee pre-placement and routine physical examinations.

PROTECT! Select protective eyewear designed for a specific duty or hazard. Protective eyewear must meet the current standards referenced by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and later revisions.

PARTICIPATE! For maximum protection against eye injuries, establish a 100% mandatory program that requires eye protection in all operation areas of your plant. Experience shows this kind of program prevents more injuries and is easier to enforce than one limited to certain departments, areas or jobs.

FIT! Workers cannot be expected to use their protective eyewear unless it fits well

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research.

and is comfortable. To ensure that eyewear is adequate, have it fitted by an eye care professional or someone trained to do this. Provide the means for repair of eyewear and require each worker to be responsible for his or her own gear.

PLAN FOR AN EMERGENCY! Establish first-aid procedures for eye injuries. Make eyewash stations accessible, especially where chemicals are used. Train workers in basic first aid and identify those with more advanced first-aid training.

EDUCATE! Conduct ongoing educational programs to establish, maintain and reinforce the need for protective eyewear.



**Call the PBA Hotline
at 1-800-331-2020**

Add eye safety to your regular employee education/training programs and include it as a part of new employee orientation.

SUPPORT! Management support is key to having a successful eye safety program. Management should all set an example by wearing protective eyewear whenever and wherever needed.

REVIEW! Continually review and, when needed, revise your accident prevention policies. The goal should be to have NO eye injuries or accidents!

PUT IT IN WRITING! When all parts of your safety program have been created, put them in writing. Display a copy of the policy in areas where workers go, and include a review of the policy in new employee orientation.

There are more than 15,000 welding equipment-related eye injuries a year, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Power tools come in second, contributing to nearly 10,000 eye injuries a year. Wear the correct safety eyewear so YOU don't become a statistic!

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