



SPECIAL POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Workplace Eye Safety
- Common Causes of Eye Injury
- What is the best defense
- When to protect your eyes
- Safety Eyewear
- What type to wear
- Types of lenses
- Computers and Your Eyes
- First Aid for Eye Emergencies
- Ten Ways to Prevent Eye Injuries at Work

P.O. Box 18667  
Charlotte, NC 28218

800.849.1503  
Fax: 704.331.9663  
Kathy@  
southernbuilder.org

Visit our website  
southernbuilder.org

# Hats ON for Safety

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## The Eyes Have It

### Workplace Eye Safety

Why is eye safety at work important? More than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work everyday. About one in ten require one or more missed work-days. 10 - 20% will cause temporary or permanent vision loss.

### What are the common causes of eye injuries?

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

### What is the best defense?

There are three things you can do to prevent eye injury.

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

### When to protect your eyes?

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.

### Safety Eyewear includes:

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



### What type to wear.

If you are working in an area that has particles, flying objects, or dust, wear at least safety glasses with side protection. 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.

### Computers and Your Eyes

Computer screens give off little or no harmful radiation, Fatigue, dry eyes, bad lighting or how you sit in front of the computer can cause eye strain. You can help prevent eyestrain by

- Place your screen 20 –

26 inches away from your eyes and a little below eye level.

- Use a document holder
- Change your lighting to



lower glare and harsh reflections.

- Get a chair you can adjust.
- Choose screens that can tilt and swivel.

## Different Type of Safety Lenses



### *Glass Lenses:* Are

not easily scratched, can be used around harsh chemicals, can

be made in your prescription and 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 and are not as scratch resistant as glass



## First Aid for Eye Emergencies

**Be Prepared** Wear eye protection for all hazardous activities; stock a first aid kit with commercial eye wash and a rigid eye shield. **DO NOT** assume that any eye injury is harmless.

**Chemical Burns to the Eye** Immediately flush the eye with water or any drinkable liquid. Keep eye open as wide as possible. Flush for at least 15 minutes. **DO NOT** use an eye cup. **DO NOT** bandage the eye. Seek medical treatment after flushing.

**Specks in Eye** **DO NOT** rub the eye. Try to let tears wash the speck out. Try lifting the upper eyelid outward and down over the lower lid.

**Blows to the Eye** Apply cold compress without putting pressure on the eye. In case of pain, reduced vision or discoloration (black eye) seek emergency medical help.

## Ten Ways to Prevent Eye Injuries at Work

**Assess!** Inspect all work areas, access routes and equipment for hazards.

**Test!** Provide vision testing during employee physicals. Vision problems can cause accidents.

**Protect!** Select protective eyewear designed for the specific duty or hazard.

**Participate!** Create a 100% mandatory program for eye protection. A broad program is easier to enforce.

**Plan for an Emergency!** Set up first-aid procedures for eye injuries. Have eye wash stations that are easy get to. Train workers in basic first aid.

**Fit!** Workers need protective eyewear that fits well and is comfortable. Have eyewear fitted by an eye care professional or someone trained to do this. Require each worker to be in charge of their own gear.

**Educate!** Conduct ongoing educational programs to create, keep up, and highlight the need for protective eye wear. Add eye safety to your regular employee training programs and to orientation.

**Support!** Management support is key to having a successful eye safety program. Management can show support for the program by wearing protective eyewear whenever and wherever needed.

**Review!** Regularly review and up-

date your accident prevention policies. Your goal should be **NO** eye injuries or accidents.

**Put it in writing!** Display a copy of the policy in work and employee gathering areas. Include a review of the policy in new employee orientation.



*Some information in this newsletter was taken from [www.preventingblindness.org](http://www.preventingblindness.org)*