

# Toolbox Talk

## Safety Glasses Toolbox Talk

The CDC reports on average 2,000 eye injuries occur at workplaces across the US everyday. The construction industry makes up a majority of that number. From dust and small particles, to chemical splashes and blunt impacts, the face and eyes are no place to skimp on protection.

Eye injuries are painful, even a “minor” injury can result in time away from work and lasting effects. So let’s break this down into the facts.

### There are 3 classifications of injuries

1. Striking or Scraping: This is the most common type of eye injury, where an object makes contact with the eye. It might be small like concrete dust that collects on the surface of the eye and causes irritation when blinking, or large like a chunk of wood that makes a blunt impact to the eye area.
2. Penetration: Metal fragments, splinters of wood, nails, staples and the like that puncture the eye and could cause permanent vision loss.
3. Chemical/Thermal Burns: Getting splashed by a cleaning product or looking at an arch flash. These injuries typically effect both eyes.

### Regulation Number

[1926.102\(a\)\(1\)](#) The employer shall ensure that each affected employee uses appropriate eye or face protection when exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation.

### *Employer Responsibilities*

- Perform a workplace hazard assessment. Use this time to look at each task in detail and determine when eye protection is required and the best means of protection.
- Work through the Hierarchy of Control
  - Elimination – Physically remove the hazard
  - Substitution – Replace the hazard
  - Engineering Control – Isolate people from the hazard
  - Administrative – Make rules to change the way people work
  - PPE – Personal Protective Equipment
- If your employees are required to wear a specific PPE for their task, you need to provide it, provide training on rules and maintenance, and enforce the rules.

### *Employee Responsibilities*

- Wear and maintain the PPE your employer provided.
- If you prefer your own style, glasses/goggles must be stamped with ANSI Z87.1 proving they are tested to meet or exceed the impact ratings.
- If lenses become too scratched or damaged to see through they should be replaced
- Did I mention WEAR THE GLASSES. No task should be worth your vision. And Squinting does not work!

### *In Summary*

You only get one set of eyes. Injuries are painful and can have lasting effects. Thinking “oh this cut will only take a second and I’ll be done” is the wrong attitude. The injury can happen in the blink of an eye, literally. You can find fashionable glasses at any construction store or in the wide world of Amazon, claiming your glasses are uncomfortable is a bad excuse.

### *Questions for you*

1. What daily job tasks are putting your eyes in danger?
2. Do you have safety glasses readily available?
3. Are glasses enough protection, or would goggles or a face shield be better?