Keep an Eye on Your Sight

What’s at Stake?

Being splashed in the face with molten metal and being splashed with water will have dramatically different results on your body. One is a nuisance, the other could rob you of your sight or cost you your life. Workers experience eye injuries on the job for two major reasons:

1. They were not wearing eye protection.
2. They were wearing the wrong kind of protection for the job

What’s the Danger?

Flying fragments from wood chips, sand, dirt, mists, dusts, hot slag from welding and cutting, molten metal, and radiation, chemical burns, and working around intense light, lasers and glare are common eye and face hazards you must protect yourself against.

How to Protect Yourself

1. Safety glasses with side shields offer impact protection for larger sized flying debris, such as that produced during chipping and drilling work.
2. For finer particles, such as mists and dust, and working with chemicals or possible blood splashes, goggles are the safest choice. The combination of a face shield and goggles provides the best protection when working with chemicals, blood and other liquids that have the potential to splash or spray.
3. Put a face shield on over your safety glasses or goggles when doing overhead work where particles could fall onto your face or into your eyes. Face shields should never be worn without safety glasses or goggles.
4. A helmet and goggles, are also needed when working with molten metals and abrasive blasting materials.

5. Welding helmets with specially tinted lenses are used to protect against the intense light produced during welding, working with lasers and other forms of optical radiation. The intensity of light or radiant energy produced by welding, cutting, or brazing operations varies. Your employer will help you select protection right for the task you are doing.
6. Eye and face protection must be comfortable and not restrict vision or movement. Clean them regularly with a non-abrasive cleaner. Protect them during storage from scratches, being crushed, chemical exposure and direct sunlight. Replace eye and face protection when they are broken, scratched, pitted or no longer fit well.

Remember: sunglasses and regular prescription glasses **do not** provide impact protection and should not be worn in place of safety glasses. Instead, talk to your employer about getting safety glasses or goggles fitted with prescription lenses.

Final Word

Don’t take your sight for granted. Follow safe work practices, keep your PPE in good condition and on your face to keep your peepers protected.