

# Keeping an Eye on safety Stats and Facts

## FACTS

**Primary causes of on-the-job eye injuries include:**

1. **Striking or scraping:** Small particles or objects striking or scraping the eye, such as: dust, cement chips, metal slivers, and wood chips. Large objects may also strike the eye or face, or a worker may run into an object causing blunt-force trauma to the eyeball or eye socket.
2. **Penetration:** Objects like nails, staples, or slivers of wood or metal can go through the eyeball and result in a permanent loss of vision.
3. **Chemical and thermal burns:** Industrial chemicals or cleaning products are common causes of chemical burns to one or both eyes. Thermal burns to the eye also occur, often among welders.

**▪ Welding injuries to the face and eyes generally fall into four categories:**

- Hot metal slag burns
- Injuries from flying particles
- Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation
- Exposure to irritating fumes, vapors, and chemicals

## STATS

- Work-related eye injuries also can be costly financially: One BLS report estimated that eye injuries cost employers more than \$467 million annually.
- Each day, more than 2,000 U.S. workers experience a work-related eye injury.
- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

(NIOSH) reports that every day about 2,000 U.S. workers sustain job-related eye injuries that require medical treatment. However, safety experts and eye doctors believe the current eye protection can lessen the severity or even prevent 90 percent of these eye injuries.

- 60% of workers who suffered an eye injury were wearing no eye protection or the wrong type of eye protection at the time of the accident.
- 90% of work-related eye injuries could be avoided if workers wore eye protection. (American Academy of Ophthalmology)
- Men between the ages of 25-44 comprise 80 % of all workplace eye injury victims.
- Eye injuries account for nearly 45% of all head injuries that lead to missed work days.
- 61% of eye injuries occur in manufacturing, construction or trade jobs.
- BLS reported that more than 50 % of workers injured while wearing eye protection thought the eyewear had minimized their injuries.