Workplan: How to Implement an Eye and Face PPE Program

The use of proper eye and face protection, such as safety glasses, goggles, face shields and helmets can prevent countless eye injuries. Safety regulations require employers provide eye and face protection whenever there is a hazard potential and engineering and administrative controls couldn't eliminate the hazard or provide enough protection. This Workplan focuses on implementing an Eye and Face PPE program but can easily be modified to include all PPE.

Step 1: Conduct a PPE Hazard Assessment

Many jobs and tasks have the potential to cause injury eye and face injuries. Doing a thorough hazard assessment allows you to identify hazardous processes, areas, jobs, and tasks where PPE is necessary and required.

Common sources of injury include:

Impact – Forcible contact from flying objects, such as large chips, fragments, particles, sand, and dirt from chipping, grinding, machining, masonry work, wood working, sawing, drilling, riveting and/or sanding.

Heat – Emission of extreme heat from furnace operations, pouring, casting, hot dipping, welding or other similar operations.

Chemical – Liquid splash and droplets, fumes, vapors and irritating mists from acid and chemical handling, degreasing and plating.

Dust – Nuisance or fine dust from woodworking, buffing or general dusty conditions.

Optical Radiation – Ultraviolet (UV) and blue light, infrared (IR), glare and intense light from welding, torch-cutting, -brazing, -soldering, and laser work.

Electrical – Arc flashes and sparks from working around electricity.

Environmental Factors – Working environment and the temperature of area where safety equipment is being used such as high humidity and sources of motion in the area.

Human Factors – Length of work with safety equipment, worker fit and comfort, compatibility with prescription eyewear; employees with corrective lenses should either wear eye protection that incorporates the prescription into the design or wear additional eye protection over their prescription lenses.

Step 2: Select and Provide the Right Types of PPE

When selecting the most suitable eye and face protection consider these factors:

- Level of protection against hazards.
- Proper fit and comfort.
- Allows for unrestricted vision and movement.
- Durable and easily cleanable.
- Allows for unrestricted functioning of any other required PPE.

All protective eye and face wear must comply with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards Z87.1/CSA Z94.3.

Step 3: Provide Training

Workers must be trained on the hazards that exist in the workplace and the hazards of their specific jobs and tasks. If these activities require them to wear PPE, they must be trained on:

- When PPE must be worn, and disciplinary action taken when requirements aren’t followed.
- The kind/type to wear – i.e. sunglasses are not effective protection during welding operations.
- How to recognize hazards and what to do if they have

questions about what PPE will best protect them.
- Correct and safe donning and doffing procedures (putting on and taking off PPE).
- Safe use and useful life of their equipment.
- When PPE should be replaced and how the replacement process works.

Refresher training should be done:

- Annually when required – i.e. hearing protection and respirators.
- When tasks or processes change, and the PPE requirements change.
- When a different or new type of PPE is being used.
- When workers are observed not wearing or caring for their PPE properly.

Step 4: Keep Documentation

It’s important to document everything related to your PPE program:

- PPE hazard assessment and review of potential engineering controls.
- PPE selection process(es).
- Initial training, annual or refresher retraining program.
- Disciplinary actions taken when someone is found not using their PPE.

Documentation is important because it lets you gauge the effectiveness of your PPE requirements and ensure all workers receive the necessary training. It is also your best defense if there are problems in the future either with workers who are non-compliant or when regulatory inspections take place.

You are establishing due diligence if you can document four key provisions of your PPE program:

1. You performed a written hazard assessment and you selected and provided the right PPE to your workers.
2. You developed specific rules and procedures for workers regarding the use of the PPE.

3. You provided appropriate training to workers regarding all aspects of the use of PPE.
4. You enforced your rules about PPE whenever you saw violations of them.