



COMPANY NAME: _____

Volume 46 Issue 10 March 6, 2023

PPE to Protect Your Vision

We wear eye protection on the jobsite as a defense against eye injury and damage to our vision. Let's discuss some common tasks that can expose you to eye hazards, and the types of PPE you should wear to protect your eyes.

There are many tasks on a construction site that can be dangerous if you don't wear eye protection.

- **Power tool use:** Saws, grinders, and drills produce flying debris that can injure your eyes.
- **Welding activities:** Welding generates bright flashes of light and sparks that can cause serious injuries including burns and blindness.
- **Working with chemicals:** Chemicals can splash or spray into your eyes, causing irritation, burns, and permanent blindness.
- **Operating heavy machinery:** Bulldozers, cranes, excavators, and other heavy equipment can produce flying debris, dust, and other hazards.
- **Demolition:** Demolition generates toxic dust that can damage your eyes and poison your lungs.
- **Working in tight spaces or close to co-workers:** With less room to maneuver, it's easier to get poked in the eye by a bolt or a nail. Watch out when someone nearby is using a nail gun or other tools that create flying objects or debris.
- **Operating or working near laser equipment:** Lasers can cause blindness and other injuries even if you're far away.

Wear the appropriate eye protection for the task at hand. Different types of eye protection are suitable for different tasks.

Safety glasses have impact-resistant lenses and side shields to protect your eyes from flying debris. While safety glasses are suitable for use in most construction environments, they do not provide full coverage for your eyes and face.

Goggles should fit snugly and provide full coverage of your eyes and the area immediately around them. Goggles protect you from exposure to chemicals and flying particles. Some goggles can be worn over prescription glasses.

Face shields fully cover your whole face. Wear one for extra protection when there is a risk of exposure to chemicals, sparks, or flying objects. You should always wear safety glasses or goggles when you wear a face shield.

Respirator face shields are full-face respirators designed to protect your entire face—including your eyes—from dust, fumes, vapors, and other airborne contaminants.

Filter lenses should be part of your eye protection when you're exposed to optical radiation from welding, brazing, torch-cutting, soldering, and when you work with or around lasers.

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SAFETY REMINDER

Never look directly at the sun or any laser beam. Both can cause permanent damage, including blindness.

NOTES:

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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Volume 46 Issue 11 March 13, 2023

Ladder Safety is not Difficult

Every year, hundreds of people die in ladder-related accidents, and thousands suffer disabling injuries. But you can avoid ladder accidents. In March, the American Ladder Institute sponsors National Ladder Safety Month, so now is the perfect time to talk about how you can prevent ladder accidents by making safe choices.

Ask these questions before you climb a ladder:

- Do I really need a ladder? A ladder may not be the best option. It may be safer to use a scaffold or a scissor lift.
- What type of ladder do I need? If you're working near electricity, don't use an aluminum ladder or any other metal ladder. Choose a wooden or fiberglass ladder instead.
- How long should the ladder be? Using a ladder that's too long or too short is unsafe. For instance, a stepladder is too short for the job if you'll need to stand on either of the top two steps. A straight or extension ladder is too long if it can't be set up at the correct angle because of a ceiling, or if it extends more than 3 feet beyond the top support.
- What's the Duty Rating of this ladder? The Duty Rating—or maximum load rating—is the total amount of weight your ladder can support. The sum of your weight, plus the weight of your PPE, tools, equipment, and supplies has to be less than the ladder's Duty Rating.

- Is this ladder in good working order? Inspect the ladder and all of its components including the rungs, steps, rails, feet, ropes, and locking mechanisms. Make sure the ladder doesn't have mud or grease on it. If the ladder isn't in good shape, put a "Do Not Use" tag on it and remove it from service. Then, get a ladder that's safe.
- Are there hazards in the area? Look for wet floors, mud, soft ground, and power lines. Set up the ladder on a surface that's firm and level. Check the weather. Don't climb a ladder during rain or high winds.
- Am I in good shape to climb a ladder? Clean mud off your boots before climbing. Be sure you're not overtired, dizzy, or taking medication that could make you lose your balance.
- Is the ladder in the right place for the work I have to do? If not, move it to an appropriate spot. You need to be close enough to your work that you won't be tempted to overreach. Your belt buckle should always be between the rails of the ladder. If you have to reach farther, it's time to climb down and move the ladder.

Ladder safety isn't difficult, but you have to pay attention, know what you're doing, and make safe choices.

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SAFETY REMINDER

A box is not a ladder. Use the right tool for the job.

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Weekly Safety Meetings

Safety Training for the Construction Industry

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Standard Subscription

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Drug and Alcohol Abuse Affect Safety

Drug and alcohol abuse is a serious issue in the construction industry. Around 15% of all construction workers in the U.S. have problems with substance abuse. The dangers and consequences of substance abuse can affect not only your safety, but the safety of others on the jobsite.

Substances that are commonly misused or abused include: illegal drugs, prescription drugs (for medical and non-medical use), over-the-counter medications, recreational drugs, and alcohol. Using more than one substance at a time is very dangerous. Prescription drugs are commonly abused. Here are some signs of prescription drug abuse: you take it to get high, you take more than you're supposed to, or you take it for reasons you didn't discuss with your doctor. Never share prescription drugs with others. It's dangerous and it's illegal.

Drugs and alcohol are prohibited on the job. When you're here, you need to be fit for duty. Even some prescription drugs can make you unfit to work. If you come to work under the influence, you could be fired. In addition, you could face legal consequences if your drug use causes an accident or leads to the death of a co-worker or bystander.

When you use drugs or alcohol, you can't work safely and you endanger others. The jobsite is dangerous enough. If you're under the influence of any substance, your judgment and coordination are impaired, and your reaction time is slowed. When you're under the influence, it's impossible for you to focus on safety and make good

decisions. You might not even notice dangers around you. When anyone's using on the jobsite, everyone's at risk for accidents and injuries.

Construction work is physically and mentally demanding. Too many workers turn to drugs and alcohol to manage their stress or to dull the chronic pain of injuries. Some addictions start when injured workers take addictive painkillers that are prescribed by a doctor. Be aware that opioid pain relievers are the most commonly misused prescription drugs. Not only are they extremely addictive, they can lead to death by overdose or suicide. Unfortunately, construction workers are more likely to die of opioid use than workers in other industries.

Help is available if you want to get sober. If you think you have a problem with substance abuse, get the help you need. If you have access to an Employee Assistance Program, that's a good place to start. You can also reach out to your doctor or call 1-800-662-HELP (4357). All of these resources can connect you with confidential access to treatment and help you find support groups or a counselor. Good construction workers are hard to replace and they're important to our communities and our economy, so employers want to help people recover from addiction.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Injuries and musculoskeletal conditions are associated with increased opioid use among construction workers.

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Volume 46 Issue 13 March 27, 2023

Small Equipment Safety

Today we're going to focus on controlling the hazards of small equipment you use at work. Power tools, pumps, compressors, generators, paint sprayers, and portable heaters are common on the jobsite. Because this equipment is always around, you may not pay attention to the hazards it can create. It's better to control the hazards than deal with the bloody aftermath of an accident.

Let's discuss how you can operate small equipment safely and prevent accidents:

- Don't wing it. Don't operate a piece of small equipment that you're not familiar with. Make sure you have the proper training on how to use the equipment safely. If you have questions or need training, talk to your supervisor.
- Use the right equipment for the job. Even if you have to go to the shop or get a rental, make sure you use the right equipment.
- Inspect the equipment daily. If there's a pre-start checklist, go through it on paper, not from memory. Look for damage and wear. Make sure guards and safety features are in place and working properly. Check fuel tanks for leaks. Test GFCIs on generators.
- Continue your inspection. Check attachments, fittings, connections, hoses, welding leads, and extension and power cords (including checking ground prongs). Take damaged equipment out of service and tag it "Do Not Use."
- Watch out for vibration. Compressors, pumps, and generators vibrate. That vibration can cause the equipment to "walk." Make sure they can't "walk" into trouble, like vibrating off the edge of a concrete pad, falling into an excavation, or sliding off an upper floor of a building.
- Be aware of your work environment. Know where it's safe to operate small equipment. If you're using equipment that's powered by gasoline, use it outside or make sure the exhaust is vented outside. Don't use power tools in wet or damp conditions. Don't weld or use grinders, or other equipment that produces sparks, near flammable materials.
- Follow LOTO procedures when you have to change attachments, replace blades, or service small equipment. Don't remove guards until the equipment is unplugged and all hazardous energy is controlled. Remember to release any compression in the engine cylinders.

Turn off equipment when it's not in use. You'll save energy and you'll help to control noise on the jobsite and in the neighborhood around the jobsite.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Look up and live. Look overhead for power lines. Make sure the tools you use can't touch them, especially long items like ladders and bull floats.

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