

**Farm Bureau
Safety & Health Network**



Contacts: A.J. Ferguson
(801) 233-3006
aferguson@fbfs.com

Marsha Purcell
(202) 406-3706
marshap@fb.org

Keeping an eye on safety

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sandy, UT – According to a study by the National Eye Institute, almost 2,000 U.S. workers receive medical treatment for eye injuries every day. This number reflects the eye injuries that occur at work. It is almost inconceivable that there could be possibly be that many injuries in a day throughout the U.S. This leads one to believe that many people have not yet understood the true value of safety glasses and the need to wear them. Take a moment to ponder how many times you have had a near miss with an object almost entering or hitting your eye. It is doubtful that there is anyone who hasn't had at least one near miss. Yet, has this changed our attitude about the need for safety glasses? How often do you say to yourself, "I will do this really fast, nothing will happen," or "Nothing bad has ever happened before." Then you experience another near miss.

Eyes typically are not thought of as being a tool, yet how often they are used in this capacity. It is important to take care of them, like you would any tool that is of value to you. The industries that have the highest risk for eye injuries are construction, manufacturing, mining, carpentry, auto repair, electrical work, plumbing, welding and maintenance. What about agriculture? The National Safety Council Injury Facts 2005-2006 Edition reported 870 persons sustained eye injuries in agriculture. This number is too high for anyone to feel safe about not wearing eye protection. Remember in agriculture you will find yourself repairing machinery, welding, spray painting, wiring, mixing and loading chemicals and building new storage buildings or barns. Orchards can also prove to be dangerous, with low hanging branches, remember to always use safety glasses when operating power tools. Many of the tasks or jobs farmers and ranchers do are similar to the industries with the highest risk. An eye injury can prove to be painful, disfiguring and lead to partial or total blindness.

"In my visits to various agricultural operations, I usually do not see proper eye protection in use. I would never wish to see anyone lose an eye or suffer any severe injury resulting in lost time from work or lost wages during recovery,"

reported A.J. Ferguson, Safety Director, Utah Farm Bureau Federation. If there is even the slightest possibility to sustain an injury to your eyes, use your glasses, face-shield or goggles. Keep those eyes safe!

Here are a few tips to help:

- Look for “ANSI Z87” marked safety glasses
- Wear goggles when striking metal surfaces
- Visit your eye doctor regularly
- Protective eye wear should be comfortable
- Replace safety glasses when severely scratched or damaged
- Use the right protection for the job
- Pay attention to the location of eyewash stations and know how to use them
- Face-shields work great at protecting eyes from dust, sparks, splashes and chaff, but offer very little protection from an impact. If impact is possible, wear safety glasses under the face-shield
- Use properly tinted safety glasses when welding

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