

DAWG TRACKS

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

MS Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station
MSU Extension Service



March is Workplace Eye Wellness month. In the United States we have an average of over 6,800 eye injuries per day, but we also know that over 90% of these eye injuries are preventable with proper protective eyewear.

Eye injuries can occur during many different job tasks. Eye hazards are present if you...

- work on items overhead
- use power tools
- are around equipment producing dust
- work with liquids or gases
- weld/cutting
- use lasers
- handle chemicals
- are in windy conditions

Exposure to these hazards are reduced with proper eye protection. Safety rated eye protection devices come in many different forms.

- Glasses
- Goggles
- Shields
- Hoods

It is important to use a form that is effective against the hazard, fits well, and is comfortable to the individual wearing it.

“Digital Eye Strain” can affect the eye wellness of those that spend hours on the computer. Symptoms of digital eye strain include blurred vision, irritated or watery eyes, and headaches. After hours of screen time, the eyes’ muscle system simply experiences fatigue. To help reduce the effects, the recommendation is to take frequent breaks by using the “20-20-20” rule. Every 20 minutes look away from your screen and look at an object 20 feet away, for at least 20 seconds. This gives your eyes a chance to reset and replenish themselves.

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Eye Injury Prevention Tips:

- ✓ Keep safety eyewear available near the area of the hazard. Quick access means a person is more likely to use it.
- ✓ Anyone in the same area of flying debris should also wear eye protection, not just the direct user of a tool or equipment operator.
- ✓ Lower glare and harsh reflections on screens. Glare filters can also help on computers, tablets, or cell phones.
- ✓ In addition to the correct hood lens for a welder, a curtain or wall may be necessary to protect the eyes of other people around this operation. Welding light radiation can reflect and affect others in the area as far as 50 feet away.
- ✓ While using a computer, place the screen 20-26 inches away and a little below eye level to help reduce eye strain.
- ✓ Legit eye protection devices will be marked with “Z87.1”. Most sunglasses are not safety glasses.

If your eye is injured know the first aid measures to prevent further damage:

- Speck of debris – do NOT rub eye but try to blink or flush it out.
- Eye contact with chemicals - keep the eye open as wide as possible and flush with clean water for at least 15 minutes, do not bandage, then seek medical attention.
- Blow to the eye – apply cold compress without pressure.
- Never try to remove an object stuck in the eye yourself; seek medical attention immediately.

Sources:

<https://preventblindness.org>
<https://www.hmpgloballearningnetwork.com>