

Your Eyes

Agricultural workers risk eye injuries when performing many common job tasks. These injuries range from minor abrasions, causing mild discomfort and loss of production time, to major, disabling conditions that cause severe pain and possible vision loss.

TRUE STORY

To build a wooden fence around a lagoon on a dairy ranch, a worker used an electric nail gun. His supervisor trained him to use the nail gun properly, and gave him safety glasses and leather gloves.

Returning to work after his lunch break, the worker realized that he forgot to bring his safety glasses. He resumed working with the nail gun without wearing safety glasses.

A nail struck the head of a previous sunken nail and bounced, hitting the worker in his right eye. Hearing the worker's cry for help, the supervisor rushed to the scene and took the injured employee to the hospital. But physicians were unable to save the employee's eye.

What could have prevented this accident?

- Wear appropriate eye protection. In this case, use safety glasses approved by the American National Standards Institute - Standard Z-78.1—and possibly a face shield to deflect objects.

How to Protect Your Eyes

Employee awareness of job hazards and proper selection and consistent use of approved eye protection will prevent eye injuries. Workers should wear appropriate eye protection and equipment to protect from dust, foreign objects, ultraviolet rays from welding, and chemical splashes. Install and maintain protective shields and guarding on power implements, such as brush shredders and shop grinders.

EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employer:

- Conduct initial and ongoing evaluations so that all power equipment with eye-injury potential has shields and guards in place and operable.
- Identify all activities that require protective eye equipment, and educate workers to use the equipment consistently.
- Assure that protective eye equipment is appropriate to address the hazard. Safety glasses must be approved by the American National Standards Institute - Standard Z-78.1.

- Develop safe work procedures to prevent eye injuries.
- Monitor employee compliance in using protective eye equipment and develop an employee disciplinary program for non-compliance.

Employee:

- Understand and follow your employer's rules to prevent eye injuries.
- Ask your supervisor if you're unsure when and how to wear personal protective equipment.
- Inform your supervisor immediately if equipment shields/guards are missing or broken or if you need eye protection equipment.

Zenith provides workplace safety resources at: **TheZenith.com**[®]