

NRMCA Monthly Safety Initiative

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Eye Safety – Those In Favor, Say “Eye”

Eye Safety and the Ready Mixed Concrete Industry

Like most, the ready mixed concrete industry must be ever vigilant in its quest to protect worker vision and reduce eye injuries, whenever possible. Although eye injuries do occur, NRMCA safety experts believe the right eye protection can lessen the severity or even prevent 90% of these eye injuries. Chemicals or foreign objects in the eye and scratches on the cornea are common eye injuries that can occur at work. Other common eye injuries come from fluids splashed in the eye, burns from steam, and welding light exposure. In general, ready mixed concrete industry eye injuries occur for two major reasons; 1) They were not wearing eye protection; or 2) They were wearing the wrong protection for the task.



What to Know About Eye Protection

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires workers to use eye and face protection whenever there is a reasonable probability of injury that could be prevented. Personal protective eyewear, such as goggles, face shields, safety glasses or full-face respirators must be used when an eye hazard exists. The necessary eye protection depends upon the type of hazard, the circumstances of exposure, other protective equipment used, and individual vision needs. Side shields placed on your conventional (dress) glasses do not provide enough protection to meet the OSHA requirements. When working where particles or dust is flying wear safety glasses with side protection. When working with chemicals (like admixtures or truck wash) wear goggles and/or full-face shields. In addition, they provide a secure shield around the entire eye and protect against hazards coming from any direction. Goggles can be worn over prescription glasses and contact lenses. When near welding operations wear special purpose welding helmets with a shield.

Eye Safety Do's and Don'ts

- Think first, know the eye hazards in the workplace
- Conduct an eye hazard assessment of the plant to determine where eye protection is needed and what type
- Remove or reduce eye hazards where possible and provide appropriate safety eyewear
- Require employees to use safety eyewear whenever necessary
- Keep safety eyewear in good condition and replace when damaged
- Do not wear typical "vision glasses" or contact lenses as eye protection, as they do not provide the protection needed for the workplace
- For additional protection, wear side shields or wrap around-style safety glasses
- In case of chemicals, immediately flush eye with water for 15 minutes, and seek medical attention
- In case of particles, do not rub eye, if particles don't wash out, keep eye closed, and seek medical attention
- In case of blows to the eye use a gentle cold compress, and seek medical attention if severe

Resources

NRMCA: [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Program](#)

OSHA: [Eye and Face Protection](#)

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