Safety Tip of the Month

SOLAR ECLIPSES & EYE SAFETY

On Monday, August 21, 2017 from 9:05 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. North America will experience a spectacular solar eclipse. This month Risk Management would like to “Focus” on the eye safety.

Let’s Talk About Eye Safety

Each day, more than 2,000 American workers suffer an eye injury, and nearly 1 million Americans have lost some of their sight due to an eye injury, according to Prevent Blindness America (PBA). These injuries have resulted in more than $300 million in lost time, medical expenses and worker compensation, reports the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Common Causes of Eye Injury

Some common causes of workplace injury concerning eyes include: flying objects (bits of metal, glass, wood), tools, particles, chemicals, and harmful radiation.

Office Workers Are Not Immune

Even employees in relatively innocuous environments can suffer eye problems. The most common of these conditions is computer vision syndrome. While computer screens do not permanently damage vision, they can cause headaches, eye fatigue and difficulty focusing. Simple fixes for computer eye syndrome include taking more frequent rest breaks and repositioning the computer screen so it is at eye level.

The 20/20/20 Rule

American Optometric Association reports that: The average American worker spends seven hours a day on the computer, either in the office or working from home. But there’s help... Practice the 20/20/20 rule. How does it work you ask? Well it’s simple, for every 20 minutes you’re looking at your computer take 20 seconds to look 20 feet away from your screen.

Eyewear Protection

You should wear safety eyewear whenever there is a chance of eye injury. Anyone working in or passing through areas that pose eye hazards should wear protective eyewear.

Types of Eyewear Protection

Safety eyewear protection can include: non-prescription and prescription safety glasses, goggles, face shields, welding helmets and full face respirators.

What Type Is Best for Me?

The type of eye safety protection you should wear, if necessary, depends on the hazards in your workplace. If you are working in an area that has particles, flying objects, or dust, you must at least wear safety glasses with side protection (side shields). If you are working with chemicals, you should wear goggles. If you are working near hazardous radiation (welding, lasers, or fiber optics) you must use special-purpose safety glasses, goggles, face shields, or helmets designed for that task.

Ultraviolet Radiation

Exposure to UV rays can burn delicate eye tissue and raise the risk of developing cataracts and cancers of the eye. Protect your eyes from UV dangers and choosing the right sunglasses when you’re outdoors.

The Solar Eclipse

It is never safe to look directly at the sun’s rays – even if the sun is partly obscured. When watching a partial eclipse you must wear eclipse glasses at all times if you want to face the sun, or use an alternate indirect method.


Safety Statistics Snapshot

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Job Transfer/Restricted Duty</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>=0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lost Time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>↓100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Injuries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↓83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Do the Safety Statistics Reveal?

The percentage values are a month to month comparison.

We have seen a reduction in injuries for July when compared to June. Of the type of injuries observed, a drop/strike hazard was the main culprit.

Risk Management Services would like to continue to remind staff to be aware of uneven surfaces when traversing through parking lots, grassy areas and while on school district and probation sites. Additionally, be aware of the balance of objects and your surroundings whenever pushing, pulling or lifting objects. Inanimate objects may appear to be lightweight, but take the time to observe the in’s and out’s of an object, prior to lifting or moving it.

Got a Safety Concern?

Risk Management would love to hear from you. The Employee Safety Concern form is available through Forms Services on the LACOE intranet. You can report items anonymously if you choose by sending the safety form via interoffice mail to Risk Management.

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