

GCA Health & Safety Committee

SAFETY ALERT



On February 20th, 2020, a compressor service technician was blowing out a turbo housing with compressed air. The unit the employee was working on was inside a shop. A glare from the sun had started coming through a door making it difficult for the worker to see what he was doing. He stopped the task to lift his safety glasses for a moment and almost immediately felt something in his eye; metal debris, either from the cloud of material in the air, or possibly off of his hand, hair or clothing. The employee went to an occupational clinic and the object was easily removed, resulting in a First Aid case.

“How do eye injuries happen when safety glasses are being worn?”

- Glasses not worn properly. Wearing glasses down on the nose will not protect the eyes. This can happen with worn out glasses, or done by a worker whose safety glasses are too dirty, scratched or fogged up. Take care of your glasses and replace them when necessary!
- Even when worn properly, “cutting” your eyes and looking over the top of your glasses creates an opening for debris to fall through. Avoid bending your neck down, and always look directly at your work.
- When operating a power tool or socket set just above the ground, we often have to turn them sideways. The vent from the power tool or wind can easily blow dust or metal shavings into your eye.
- When lifting any kind of material overhead, debris on the material often comes off and falls onto the person. Even with safety glasses on, debris from above may fall behind or around your glasses.

- Remember, we work in hot conditions. If you do not keep your face, especially your forehead, clean, your perspiration can “wash” debris into your eyes.
- Due to the heat, we often reach up to wipe the sweat away. Debris from your hand, glove or sweat towel can actually be rubbed into the eyes.
- We also work in windy conditions. Wind blows debris into the air and can sometimes go around our glasses. This applies to large fans in a shop as well, such as where welding and grinding is taking place.
- When cutting metal or drilling overhead, the metal shavings often end up settling onto our hardhats and safety glasses. In addition, we often use full-face shields. When we remove our hardhat or glasses, or raise the face-shield, that debris can fall down into the eyes.



Your GCA H&S Committee Recommends the Following Safe Practices!

- Review JSA prior to starting work, noting each task’s hazards, condition of PPE in use and hazard controls available in case of poor visibility.
- Use a face shield when needed. Always wear safety glasses under a face shield/welding hood. Goggles are even better. Avoid removing eye/face PPE in a hazardous environment.
- Brush debris off shirts, gloves, and hardhats. Look down or close your eyes when removing eyewear or lifting a face shield/welding hood.
- Wear PPE designed to minimize dust in the eyes when necessary, such as goggles or foam-padded safety glasses.
- Close or lower shop doors, block windows or adjust body placement when working with difficult lighting, e.g. sun in the eyes, floodlights at night.
- During warm weather, be cautious of fan placement in the shop and of windy days with dust being blown around.
- When using compressed air to clean equipment, always check the line of fire. Warn other workers and do not blow debris at anyone.
- Always remember to shut fans off before moving them. Never grab a fan by the shroud when the blade is spinning!

No job is so important that we can’t take the time to do it safely!

