



News Release

3030 N. 3rd Street

Phoenix, AZ 85012-3039

scfaz.com

CONTACT: Mitch Doty

Phone: 602.631.2827

mdoty@scfaz.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 6, 2008

Protect Your Eyes, Ears While on the Job

Two thousand U.S. workers suffer some type of eye injury every day. According to the National Institute of Occupation Safety and Health, one-third of those injuries are treated in a hospital, and about 100 result in workers requiring time away from work.

“For many workers, expected consequences drive their behavior. They may have performed a task many times without an accident, or they think they’ll only be only operating equipment for a few minutes, so they feel eye protection isn’t needed,” says Gerry Coley, SCF Arizona Loss Control Consultant.

“But an accident can happen at any time and you never know when. It is better to be wearing protection than trying to guess when an accident will happen,” Coley adds.

Depending on the task, various options exist to protect workers’ eyes:

- *Safety Glasses* – Made from impact resistant materials, safety glasses protect eyes from direct impact. Safety glasses should meet American National Standard Institute specifications and be marked with a “Z87” or “Z87+” somewhere on the frame or lens.
- *Goggles* – Goggles are stronger than safety glasses and protect against indirect exposures to the eyes from liquid and chemical splashes and blowing dust.
- *Face shields* – Face shields should be used in conjunction with safety glasses or goggles. They provide an increased level of protection when the job involves spraying, chopping or grinding.

Cover your Ears!

“Noise-induced hearing loss is 100 percent preventable but once acquired ... is permanent and irreversible” says NIOSH, which adds that 44 percent of carpenters and 48 percent of plumbers report perceived hearing loss.

“If employees are working in a noisy environment, employers should conduct testing to determine what, if any, hearing protection should be worn by their workers,” says Coley.

The choice of hearing protection products normally boils down to earplugs or earmuffs. Among the most common are:

- *Expandable foam plugs* – Made of a formable material designed to expand and conform to the shape of each person’s ear canal. The worker simply rolls the expandable plugs into a thin, crease-free cylinder so that half the length will easily fit into the ear canal.
- *Pre-molded, reusable plug* – Designed to seal the ear canal without being uncomfortable. A worker may need a different size plug for each ear.
- *Canal caps* – Attached to a flexible plastic or metal band, canal caps are convenient because workers can leave the band hanging around their necks and insert the caps only when exposed to noise. Not all canal caps have tips that adequately block all types of noise.
- *Earmuffs* – Designed to completely cover the outer ear to block out noise. Muffs can be “low profile” with small ear cups or with large cups for use in extreme noise. Workers with heavy beards or sideburns or who wear glasses may not get a good seal around the ear.

Workers should choose the ear protection that is comfortable, convenient and effective so that they will wear it every time they are exposed to hazardous noise, Coley advises.

For more information on eye and ear protection, contact an SCF Loss Control consultant at 602.631.2000