

# The 101 DAYS OF SUMMER



## Toolbox Talk Lesson Plan

### What Outdoor Workers Need to Know about Sunglasses

To ensure employees wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for their tasks, OSHA requires employers perform a PPE assessment to determine if hazards are present, or likely to be present, that necessitate the use of personal protective equipment. Employers must provide appropriate equipment to employees who need protection from the hazards.

Employers must select PPE that properly fits workers and ensure equipment is inspected and maintained. Communicate the PPE selection decision to employees and require that employees use the equipment and use it correctly. Employees must demonstrate an understanding of the training topics and the ability to use PPE before being allowed to perform work requiring the use of PPE. Vision protection is important!

**Ophthalmologists recommend that you wear sunglasses & a broad-brimmed hat whenever in the sun.**

When you fill a prescription at your local eyeglass store, your eyeglasses must meet certain safety standards, set by the FDA. Sunglasses are required by federal law to be impact resistant, but they are not shatterproof nor are they an unbreakable shield. They are not intended to function as impact protective eyewear for use in high-risk impact sports or for industrial safety uses. Performing outdoor tasks like lawn mowing, chain saw use and weed-whacking require industrial safety glasses.



The UV rays in sunlight can seriously damage the eyes. Sun damage can contribute to cataracts, macular degeneration, corneal damage, and other vision problems.” **Excessive exposure to ultraviolet light reflected off sand or pavement can damage the cornea, the eye's surface. Similar to sunburn on your skin, corneal ultraviolet injuries are painful, but usually heal quickly.**

Sunglasses should offer 99 - 100% protection from UVA and UVB light as well as screening out 75 - 95% of the visible light. They should be breakage resistant with brown, grey, green, or amber lenses. Wraparound style and polarization are advised to help reduce glare and eye fatigue, but must not obstruct peripheral vision. UV light protection comes from a chemical coating applied to the lens, not from the color or darkness of the lens. There are many manufacturers who offer stylish sunglasses that meet the ANSI Z87.1 standard.

UV protection is a property of polycarbonate lenses. Glass and plastic lenses must be treated for UV protection. Darkness or tint of lenses does not give UV protection. Polarization to reduce glare off the water requires a filter in the lenses. Polarized lenses cut reflected glare and are useful for any activity over or near water. Polarization has nothing to do with UV light protection, although many are now combined with a UV-light blocking substance. Large-framed wraparound sunglasses can protect your eyes from all angles, as opposed to ordinary eyeglass frames that may allow light to enter.

Remember, sunglasses will not make you look better, see more comfortably, or protect your eyes when they are in your pocket or on your vehicle’s dashboard. Protect your eyes whenever you go outside, no matter how briefly.

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