

Spot The Safety Violation: Protect the Windows to Your Soul



Kudos to this worker for wearing a hardhat. But what other piece of PPE should he also be wearing, especially when he's leaning this close to the drill'

They say your eyes are the window to your soul. So you'd think workers would be especially careful of protecting their vision from various hazards in the workplace. But sometimes workers forget or can't be bothered to wear proper eye protection.

For example, in this picture, the worker is wearing a hardhat, so he's clearly aware of the need for at least some PPE. But he should be wearing safety eyewear, too. When he's leaning close to the drill while operating it, pieces of material or shavings could fly into his eyes. (And depending on how loud the drill is, he may also need [hearing protection](#).)

Take 6 Steps to Protect Workers' Eyes

To ensure that workers' eyes are protected from hazards and that the company complies with the [requirements for eye protection in the OHS laws](#), take these six steps:

Step #1: Determine if there's a risk of injury to workers' eyes. For example, could they be exposed to dust, fibres, flying particles, tree branches, splashing fluids, radiation, etc.'

Step #2: Determine if you can eliminate or control these hazards. If you identify any hazards to workers' eyes, you first want to eliminate or control them. For example, determine whether you can install screens or guards around equipment to protect workers from flying particles or splashing liquids. You can also implement administrative measures, such as requiring workers to wet surfaces to keep down dust.

Step #3: Select appropriate eye protection. If you can't eliminate or control the eye hazards, determine the appropriate kind of eye protection to shield workers from them. Which type of eye protection is appropriate will depend on the nature of the eye hazard. There are seven basic classes of eye protection:

- Spectacles;
- Goggles;
- Welding helmets;
- Welding hand shields;
- Non-rigid helmets or hoods;

- Face shields; and
- Respirator facepieces.

Step #4: Ensure workers use eye protection properly. Once you've selected appropriate eye protection, make sure that workers use it correctly. For example, eye protection should fit workers properly and not obscure their vision.

Step #5: Make sure workers properly maintain their eye protection. If workers don't maintain their eye protection, it won't adequately protect their eyes. So ensure that workers inspect their eye protection before using it, clean it when needed and properly store it.

Step #6: Train workers. As with any PPE, make sure to train workers on eye protection, including when it's needed, how to use it and how to maintain it.