



# PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

March 10, 2009

OFFICE OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS MEMORANDUM No. FY09-61

Distributed via Campus Email

TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Mary Lee Hodge  
Vice President for Business Affairs

RE: March is Workplace Eye Safety and Health Month

Prairie View A&M University strives to make sure that all employees receive the best training available. March is Workplace Eye Safety and Health Month; please make sure to train your personnel to Spot Eye Hazards.

**Start with prevention.** The best way to promote eye safety is to make sure you're currently doing everything possible to prevent injuries. For example, are you:

- Identifying eye hazards all around your facility?
- Providing appropriate safety eyewear (marked ANSI Z87) to all employees exposed to eye hazards and making sure they wear it?
- Training employees to recognize eye hazards, use proper eye protection, and respond quickly and effectively to eye injuries?
- Notifying supervisors and employees immediately when new eye hazards are identified?
- Providing eyewash stations in appropriate locations around your facility and making sure employees know where they are and how to use them?
- Encouraging employees to have regular vision exams to make sure they can see well so that they can perform their jobs safely?

**Focus on key training points in safety meetings.** There are many employees that need to know about eye protection. The more they know, the more likely they are to appreciate the need for it. So be sure to talk about:

- Workplace eye hazards
- Job-related eye hazards
- Why eye protection is necessary
- Type of eye protection required for specific eye hazards
- How to get a good, comfortable fit
- How to inspect eye protection before each use
- How to maintain eye protection in good condition
- How to report eye hazards and injuries
- First aid for eye injuries

**Make sure workers know how to handle eye emergencies.** Here's a quick look at first aid for eyes:

- *For particles in the eye:*
  - Go to the nearest eyewash station or source of clean running water.
  - Don't rub the eye.
  - Flush the eye with water until the particle comes out.
  - If the particle won't rinse out or is embedded in the eye, cover both eyes and get medical attention.
  
- *For chemical splashes or burns:*
  - Go immediately to the nearest eyewash station or emergency shower.
  - Hold eyes open and flush them with water for at least 15 minutes.
  - Get medical attention.
  
- *For a blow to the eye:*
  - Apply a cold compress for at least 15 minutes to reduce pain and swelling.
  - See a doctor to make sure there is no internal damage.
  
- *For cuts near the eye:*
  - Bandage the eyes loosely.
  - Get immediate medical attention.

**Why It Matters...**

*According to the U.S. Labor Department:*

- Eye injuries cost businesses hundreds of millions a year in lost workdays, medical expenses, and workers' compensation.
- At least 90 percent of all workplace eye injuries are preventable.

*According to workplaceeyesafety.org:*

- More than 800,000 work-related eye injuries occur every year.
- The most common eye injuries are chemical burns, followed by cuts, lacerations, or punctures caused by parts, materials, and hand tools.
- Workers ages 25 to 34 are more likely to have eye injuries than any other age group, followed closely by workers ages 35-44.

MLH:cp

xc: Dr. George C. Wright