



Preventing Eye Injuries After Grinding or Cutting

Purpose

The purpose of this Toolbox Talk is to prevent eye injuries caused by improper removal of face shields and safety goggles after grinding, cutting, or similar work. Small particles often collect on top of this PPE and can fall into the eyes if removed incorrectly. Proper removal techniques can help prevent painful and potentially serious eye injuries both on and off the job.

Discussion

When grinding, cutting, or performing similar tasks, small pieces of debris become airborne and often collect on the top rim of face shields and safety goggles. Even though work may be complete, the hazard remains. If the PPE is lifted straight up or removed without care, those trapped particles can fall directly into the eyes.

Many workers have experienced irritation or injury hours later, sometimes at home or during sleep, because debris lodged in the eyebrows or hair eventually fell into their eyes. This type of injury is easily preventable by following a few simple steps when removing PPE at the end of a task.

Key Points

1. **Step away from the work area.** Move clear of dust, sparks, or flying debris before removing PPE.
2. **Bend forward slightly.** This helps prevent debris from falling toward your face or eyes.
3. **Remove PPE slowly and carefully.** Pull the face shield or goggles forward and away from your face instead of lifting straight up.
4. **Brush off above your eyes and head.** Use your hands to ruffle through your eyebrows and hairline to remove fine particles that may have settled there.

Summary

It only takes a few extra seconds to remove PPE the right way. Doing so can prevent hours or days of irritation, medical treatment, or lost time. Most eye injuries occur after the work has ended because of small particles that fall into the eyes when PPE is removed improperly. Take that extra moment to protect your vision.

Stay alert. Stay protected. Stay safe.

An English and Spanish version of this Toolbox Talk can be found online at <https://iws.support/toolbox-talks>.

Discussion & Questions

- Has anyone experienced or seen debris fall into the eyes after removing PPE?
- What steps can you add to your routine to prevent this from happening?
- How can we remind each other to take time for safe PPE removal at the end of a job?