

So many of the jobs done in the municipal sector could result in catastrophic injuries to the eyes.

Just think of the eye hazards present in our work:

- Flying dust and grit
- Welding arcs
- Chemical splash
- Sun and wind
- Objects protruding from construction areas



Wearing the right protection can prevent most eye injuries.

Basic protection is safety glasses with side shields. Look for the CSA logo on the frames, whether the glasses are prescription or non-prescription. For welding, eye protection must also be marked with the shade number.

Additional eye protection measures include:

- Don't wear contact lenses when working in dusty areas. Dust and other particles can get under the lens. If you must wear contact lenses for medical reasons, wear appropriate eye protection as well.

- Never wear contacts into rooms where chemical fumes could be present (ozone, ammonia, chlorine). These chemicals can adhere to contact lenses and cause even more damage to your eyes.
- Match your eye protection to the hazard. Goggles that protect you from dust may not protect you from splash or radiation.
- Visually inspect your protective eyewear before each use. Cracked or broken frames and scratched or pitted lenses should be replaced.
- Make sure your eyewear fits snugly.
- Clean dirty lenses with water or a lens cleaning solution to float the dirt away instead of scratching it into the lenses.
- Get your eyes checked at least every two years to make sure that problems haven't developed or gotten worse.



What if you get something in your eyes?

The employer is responsible for ensuring emergency eye wash facilities are available, depending on the level of risk – and that means a risk assessment must be completed. WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation Part 5, and specifically, Tables 5-2 and 5-3, will assist in completing the risk assessment and determining the appropriate eye wash facilities, which range from a personal eyewash unit to tempered, continuous flow eyewash facility capable of washing the eyes for a minimum of 15 minutes.