

PROTECT YOUR EYES!!!

Nearly 4,000 eye injuries occur daily in the United States (1.5 million annually) of which over 100,000 are disabling. In the fire service, nearly 4,000 eye injuries occur on an annual basis.

Eye injuries present a constant risk to fire service personnel and can occur during nearly any phase of emergency ops, including fire suppression, overhaul, medical, extrication, and rescue. Consider the possibilities: falling and flying debris, smoke, dust, body fluids, etc. The bottom line:

The #1 cause of eye injuries is not wearing eye protection

CURRENT EYE PROTECTION STANDARDS

American National Standards Institute, *Practice for Occupational and Educational Eye and Face Protection Standard Z87.1-2000* (ANSI Z87.1)

Both OSHA and NFPA 1500 standards reference ANSI Z87.1 as the benchmark standard for occupational eye and face protection. Sections 9&10 include the specific standards for evaluating factors such as impact resistance, lens thickness, projectile penetration, and optical quality. Departments should only use protective eyewear marked "Z87"; this indicates that the product has met ANSI Z87.1 standards. When NFPA 1500 standards reference ANSI Z87.1, they specifically require **primary** eye protection. ANSI Z87.1 is very clear in its description of primary versus secondary eye protection:

Definitions

Primary Protector — A device which may be worn alone or in conjunction with a secondary protector.

Secondary Protector — A device which shall be worn only in conjunction with a primary protector.

Faceshield - A protective device commonly intended to shield the wearer's face, or portions thereof, in addition to the eyes, from certain hazards. Faceshields are secondary protectors and shall be used only with primary protectors.

Goggles - A protective device intended to fit the face immediately surrounding the eyes to shield the eyes from a variety of hazards.

Section 10.1 ...While are primary protectors and may be used alone, they may also be used in conjunction with the other protectors.

