

# New York State School Safety Group 491

## Safe Schools Agenda

\_\_\_\_ School Business Off.  
\_\_\_\_ Athletic Director  
\_\_\_\_ Supt. Bldgs/Grounds  
\_\_\_\_ Site Administrators  
\_\_\_\_ Transportation Dir.  
\_\_\_\_ Lunch Director  
\_\_\_\_ Classroom Teachers  
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*A monthly service provided to help you with your efforts to make your school safe for students, staff and the public*

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### Take Steps To Improve Office Safety

*This discussion applies to all the offices in the typical school, from the superintendent's office to the guidance office to the transportation director's office. It also applies to staff rooms.*

Injuries in office settings often occur because the housekeeping of the office is lax. Papers piled precariously on desks or piles of paper or books on the floor create trip and fall hazards. Cleanliness and good hygiene can also reduce allergic reactions to mold and dust and prevent illness. Encourage all office workers to use this checklist to spot and correct hazards to their health.

- ✓ Pathways are clear at all time and are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other equipment for workers who are mobility-impaired.
- ✓ File and desk drawers are closed completely when not in use and after each use.
- ✓ File cabinets are positioned so that falls are avoided when the file drawer is pulled out.
- ✓ Workers are trained to never open more than one file drawer at a time.
- ✓ Office furniture is positioned to avoid bending, twisting, and leaning backward when seated.
- ✓ Desks and counters are kept clear of piles of paper and are cleaned daily.
- ✓ Office workers are required to maintain a neat and orderly personal workspace.
- ✓ A paper recycling program is in place to cut down on paper clutter and buildup.
- ✓ Spills on the floor are wiped up immediately.
- ✓ Chemicals are stored in separate closets or cabinets for cleaning supplies.
- ✓ Cleaning supplies are clearly marked and stored in spill-proof containers.
- ✓ Cleaning supplies are stored above counter-level to avoid potential danger with young visitors.
- ✓ The phone number of the local poison control office is clearly posted on the door to the storage area.
- ✓ There are sufficient trash receptacles located in offices as well as in kitchens, staff lounges and other areas where food is consumed.
- ✓ Kitchen counters are kept clean and free from spills and grime.
- ✓ Staff room refrigerators are cleaned weekly.
- ✓ Microwaves are wiped down at least daily.
- ✓ Trash is disposed of on at least a daily basis.
- ✓ Electrical cords and wires are secured away from walkways.
- ✓ A stepladder is positioned to avoid excessive reaching. Chairs are never used as ladders.
- ✓ Loose carpeting or damaged flooring is promptly reported and repaired.
- ✓ All machines are positioned on sturdy surfaces.
- ✓ Warning signs are posted if there is potential injury from doors that open from outside.

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## How Good Is Your Eye Safety Program?

About 2,000 eye injuries occur every day in the U.S. Even “minor” eye injuries can cause life-long vision problems and suffering -- a simple scratch from sawdust can cause corneal erosion that is recurrently painful. Hammering on metal that gives off metal slivers and the rebounding of an ordinary nail are two common causes of vision loss among construction workers and do-it-yourselfers.

Hammering, grinding, sanding and masonry work produce particles that are harmful to the eye. Chemicals can splash into the eye. Cement can even cause a chemical burn. Dusty or windy conditions can leave particles in the eye, as can the actions of co-workers. You can get an eye injury just from passing through an area where work is being performed.

How good is your eye safety program? Check the following:

- Do all workers in dangerous areas wear the proper safety glasses at all times?
- Does safety eyewear have “Z87” or “Z87+” marked on the frame and/or the lens?
  - Does the eyewear have adequate side protection?
  - Are machine guards that prevent the escape of particles in place at all times?
- Are welding curtains for arc flash protection always used when welding operations are being conducted?
- Are operations areas placed off limits to those not involved in dusty or welding operations?
- Are goggles (which are stronger than safety

glasses) used for higher impact protection, greater particle protection, chemical splashes, and welding light protection?

- Are faceshields used for spraying, chipping and grinding?
- Are welding helmets used for all arc welding?
- Are safety goggles or glasses always worn under welding helmets?
- Is there a process for checking the fit of safety glasses to make sure that they fit snugly against the face and do not slide down the nose? (The biggest gaps are usually near the corners of the glasses. The bigger the gap, the more exposure to hazards from a slight angle or above.)
- Do all staff members know where to obtain safety eyewear, and assistance in fitting it?
- Are safety glasses stored carefully to protect against scratching?
- Do workers take off their safety eyewear ONLY when they have left the site and are out of the hazard zone?
- Do the safety glasses have anti-fog coatings put on during manufacturing, or are an anti-fog solution and clean cloths made available for cleaning lenses?
- Is there a written policy on safety eyewear use? Is it posted in appropriate places? Are enforcement processes included, and are they consistently enforced?
- Do supervisors model safety eyewear use at all times, and enforce the rules for all?

