Over the last three (3) years, ASU has recorded five (5) or more eye injuries each year, all of which are preventable with the use of proper eye protection. While this may not seem like a lot, no injury should be considered acceptable, especially those that could have resulted in a permanent disability such as loss of sight and are completely preventable.

The picture is from a YouTube Video called the splash zone that demonstrates why everyone in a lab should always wear eye protection [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E836nc7SiII&NR=1&feature=endscreen](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E836nc7SiII&NR=1&feature=endscreen).

The majority of ASU injuries resulted from small particles or objects striking or abrading the eye. Bust several of these injuries were related to chemical use in the lab. Inconsistent use of eye protection is being regularly observed during laboratory safety inspections.

We cannot emphasize enough how important it is to protect your eyes from potential chemical hazards and hazards form dust, chips, and metal shavings in the machine shops. Eye protection is always needed when working with tools, especially power tools.

Engineering controls such as Plexi-glass barriers or enclosures around grinders or cutters should be used whenever feasible to prevent or reduce the potential for eye injuries. Hood sashes must be lowered to the maximum extent possible to prevent the potential for chemicals to splash or spray in the event of a spill or equipment malfunction. Even with the use of shields and sashes, personal protective equipment such as goggles, face shields, safety glasses must also be used when there is a potential hazard that may injure the eye. Safety glasses must be equipped with side-shields. This includes prescription safety glasses. Several options for detachable side-shields exist, but permanent mounted side-shields are recommended for prescription safety glasses.

Generally speaking, eye protection is to be used at all times while operating machine shop equipment such as saws, lathers, grinders and presses. Eye protection is also required while working with hazardous materials in laboratories. These requirements are addressed in training programs. In other operations where the potential for eye injuries exist, a personal protective equipment (PPE) hazard assessment must be conducted. EHS Policy EHS 105 Personal Protective Equipment ([http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ehs/ehs105.html](http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ehs/ehs105.html)) requires that each department conducts a hazard assessment of its work areas and determine if a hazard exists that requires PPE such as eye protection.

Please verify that any requirements for eye protection in your work areas are clearly communicated and being followed. EH&S is able to assist with the hazard assessments and to provide training for anyone who may need to periodically conduct hazard assessments or monitor PPE use. If you have questions about this safety topic please contact EH&S at (480) 965-1823 or [EHS@asu.edu](mailto:EHS@asu.edu).