

# SAFETY FOCUSED

July 2019

## Reporting Close Calls to Reduce Accidents

While not every workplace incident results in an injury or illness, these close calls are signs of dangerous workplace hazards. If those close calls or other safety concerns go unreported, employees will remain exposed to significant risks.

Employers rely on close call and hazard reporting in order to discover and address risks, but many employees avoid it. Here are some of the most common reasons employees avoid voicing their concerns:

- **Not enough time**—Employees may be distracted by daily work and forget about responsibilities that aren't related to their regular duties. However, if you notice a hazard, it's important to notify your supervisor to ensure the safety of you and your co-workers.
- **Unclear hazard identification**—Employees may not be aware of how small hazards can lead to safety incidents, causing them to go unreported. For example, even a slightly unstable railing can fail and lead to a dangerous fall. As a result, employees should always report any hazards they notice, no matter how small they may seem.
- **Fear of retaliation**—Some hazards are caused by employee negligence, which can cause employees to worry about repercussions for identifying an issue. However, the focus of hazard reporting is prevention and correction, and not discipline. Employees should always feel empowered to speak with their supervisors about workplace issues without worrying about getting in trouble.
- **Peer pressure**—Employees may be pressured to ignore incidents if they believe a co-worker could be punished for negligence or that a report would harm workplace relationships.

Make sure to report any hazards or safety concerns right away so issues can be corrected as quickly as possible.

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## Eye Protection in the Summer Sun

While most people are aware of how the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage skin, the eyes are even more susceptible to harm. And, while sunglasses are common when it's bright outside, it's important to check UV protection levels before purchasing protective eyewear.

According to the American Optometric Association, both short- and long-term exposure to sunlight can cause damage to the eyes, including cataracts, macular degeneration and cancer of the eyelids or the eye itself.

Employees who spend even small amounts of time outdoors need eyewear that protects them not only from debris and flying objects, but also from the sun. In order to reduce sun exposure to the eyes, consider the following tips when working outdoors:

- Wear sunglasses with UV protection of more than 95%, even in cloudy weather.
- Wear sunglasses with a lens tint that blocks at least 80%, but no more than 90%, of transmissible light. A uniform tint should also be present to help with color identification.
- If possible, stay in the shade when the sun's UV rays are at their strongest, generally between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen to the skin around your eyelids 15 to 30 minutes before entering sunlight.
- Protect your eyes from all angles by wearing sunglasses that wrap all the way around the temples, or wear a hat with a 3-inch brim to block overhead sunlight. The frame of the sunglasses should also stay as close to your eyes as possible to prevent UV rays from entering your eyes at high or low angles.



**Make sure your sunglasses block both types of UV rays. Your pair should block at least 95% of UVA rays and 99% of UVB rays.**

