All USC employees working in or adjacent to areas where the potential for eye injuries exists are required to wear protective eyewear. These hazards include harmful substances (e.g., toxics, corrosives, bio agents, or radioisotopes), radiation-producing devices, and/or projectiles etc.

**Protective Eyewear**

The following describes levels of eye protection associated with the hazard types and eyewear to be avoided.

- **Safety glasses** – Minimal level of protection; molded to face or fitted with side-shields. Some types are designed to fit over eyeglasses.
- **Safety goggles** – Completely seals the eye area and is appropriate for splash hazards e.g., handling corrosive liquids. Some types are designed to fit over eyeglasses.
- **Face shield** – Use with goggles/safety glasses to provide extra protection against splashes or projectiles. NOTE: Face shields cannot be worn without goggles or safety glasses per OSHA and ANSI guidelines.
- **Eyeglasses/sunglasses** that do not meet ANSI/ISEA Z87.1-2015 are NOT approved safety eyewear.
- **Contact lenses** may NOT be worn where eye hazards exist due to the possibility of them exacerbating eye damage per Cal-OSHA regulations. Eyeglasses must be worn in lieu of contacts with protective eyewear over the eyeglasses. This rule may not be waived other than by individual medical approval.

**What I Need to Know...**

- Select eye protection that is appropriate for the level of hazard.
- Wear tinted eyewear that matches the wavelength of the hazard when using UV, IR, or laser equipment.
- **DO NOT** wear contact lenses in working environments having harmful exposure to materials or light flashes.

- Not in the vicinity of any equipment, projectile hazards, materials, or other work (e.g., use of glass pipettes) that mandates eye protection; **AND**
- Aware and vigilant of the conditions, operations, and materials that do require eye protection and have eye protection available to use as needed.

A comprehensive lab hazard analysis is needed to determine the above (see Lab Hazard Analysis Tool [http://bit.do/usc_ehs_LHATform1](http://bit.do/usc_ehs_LHATform1)).

Undergraduates normally pay for their own protective eyewear (and other PPE) as an enrollment requirement of instructional laboratory courses. However, eye protection must be made available to undergraduates working in research labs, paid student workers, volunteers, and all other USC personnel that work in hazardous areas.

**References**

OSHA Eye and Face Protection  

Cal-OSHA Article 10. Personal Safety Devices and Safeguards  
[http://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/3382.html](http://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/3382.html)