

Chemical Engineering Department Safety Glasses Policy

MIT policy requires that all personnel, including visitors, wear eye protection at all times while they are in the laboratories of the Chemical Engineering Department. Safety glasses should be provided at the entrance of each laboratory for the use of physical plant personnel and visitors.

(a). Safety glasses with side shields provide the minimum protection acceptable for regular use. Safety glasses must meet the American National Standards Institute standard Z87.1-1989, which specifies a minimum lens thickness of 3 mm and certain impact resistance requirements. Additional eye protection should be employed whenever splash and spray hazards exist.

(b). Goggles should be worn when carrying out operations in which there is reasonable danger from splashing chemicals, flying particles, etc. For example, goggles are preferred over regular safety glasses when working with glassware under reduced or elevated pressures (e.g. – sealed tube reactions when handling potentially explosive compounds, particularly during distillations), and when employing a glass apparatus in high-temperature operations. In some instances "safety shields" should be set up around experiments for additional protection. Since goggles offer little protection to the face and neck, full-face shields should be worn when conducting particularly hazardous laboratory operations. In addition, the use of laser or ultraviolet light sources requires special glasses or goggles that have been approved by the Radiation Protection Office.

(c). Ordinary prescription glasses do not provide adequate protection against injury, and their use should be limited to providing minimal protection when you are present in the laboratory but NOT carrying out a chemical operation.

(d). Contact lenses offer no protection against eye injury and cannot be substituted for safety glasses and goggles. It is best not to wear contact lenses when carrying out operations where a chemical splash to the eyes is possible, since contact lenses can interfere with first aid and eye flushing procedures. If an individual must wear contact lenses for medical reasons, then tight-fitting goggles should be worn over the contact lenses.

(e). It is MIT policy to provide prescription safety glasses free of charge to all those personnel working in laboratories who must wear glasses to correct their vision. To obtain prescription safety glasses at MIT's expense, you must first get a fitting/prescription form from the EHS Office x2-3477 and then have it filled out by your eye doctor (at your own expense). To place your order, you then obtain a requisition form from the Chemical Engineering Department Headquarters (66-350, x3-4561) and submit it, together with the completed prescription/fitting form, to the EHS Office.