



Maine Farm Safety Program

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First Aid for Eyes

Proper first aid for eye injuries is critical. Eye injuries can occur when handling pesticides and other chemicals, using jumper cables, servicing farm equipment, welding, or working in the fields. Always wear the proper eye protection for the task performed. Should an eye injury occur, seek proper first aid and medical attention.

Fresh Water for Emergencies

Always have clean fresh water available for use in flushing out any chemicals that come in contact with the eyes. Carry five gallons of water on each nurse tank and applicator. Check the water container daily and keep full of clean, fresh water. Anyone handling ammonia or other hazardous farm chemicals should carry small squeeze bottles of clean water.

Specks in the Eyes

Lift the upper eyelid outward and down over the lower lid. Let tears wash out the speck or particle. If the speck or particle doesn't wash out, keep the eye closed, bandage it lightly and see a physician.

First Aid for Eyes

- **Clean, fresh water for flushing the eyes should be available at all work sites.**
- **Always wear proper eye protection for the task performed.**

Blows to the Eye



Apply a cold compress immediately for 15 minutes and again each hour as needed to reduce pain and swelling. If there is discoloration or blackening of the eye, it could mean internal damage has occurred. See a physician.

Cuts and Punctures of the Eye or Eyelid

Bandage the eye lightly, and see a physician at once. Do not wash out the eye with water or try to remove an object stuck in the eye.

Chemical Burns

Eye damage from chemical burns can be very serious. In all cases of eye contact with chemicals, flood the eye with water immediately, continuously and gently for at least 15 minutes. Hold the head under the faucet or pour water into the eye using a clean container. Keep the eye open as widely as possible during the flooding. Do not use an eye cup or bandage the eye. Do not apply ointments, oils, or salves. See a physician and explain the cause of the injury. Also take the label or container to the physician with you.

Spray cans are an increasing source of chemical eye injury, compounded by the force of contact. Whether containing caustics or irritants, they must be carefully used and kept away from children.

This Maine Farm Safety fact sheet is part of an educational fact sheet series produced by University of Maine Cooperative Extension. For more information on farm safety, contact your county Extension office.

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