

For Immediate Release

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70,000 EYE-RELATED INJURIES ON THE JOB EACH YEAR
COST AMERICAN BUSINESS OWNERS \$450 BILLION

Information and tips on keeping eyes safe at work is part of
National Workplace Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month in March

LAKE WORTH, Fla., Mar. 24, 2008 – March is Workplace Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month, and Eyeglass World together with The LASIK Vision Institute offers consumers and employers information and tips for reducing the number of eye-related injuries in the workplace.

People think to protect their heads with helmets or hardhats, and their clothes with smocks and aprons, but a surprisingly high percentage of people don't think to put on the proper protective eyewear in hazardous work conditions. This has resulted in an estimated 70,000 on-the-job eye-related injuries every year costing American business upwards of \$450 billion annually, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS also reports the main causes of eye injuries in the workplace for most companies can be tied to the following six culprits:

- **Flying objects** are the leading cause of eye injuries in American workplaces. Flying or falling objects or sparks striking the eye causes well over half of eye accidents. A significant number of those objects are smaller than a pinhead.
- **Contact with chemicals** causes approximately 20 percent of eye injuries.
- **Improper equipment operation** is responsible for more than 30 percent of eye-related injuries.
- **Poor choice of eyewear** results in a significant number of injuries. Although injured workers are often wearing eye protection, they're not wearing the right kind.
- **Improper fit** has contributed to 94 percent of the injuries to workers wearing eye protection when objects or chemicals go around or under the protector.
- **Lack of awareness** and simple ignorance of the risks and the required protection is responsible for many workplace eye injuries. Many injured workers, when asked after an accident, report that they didn't realize eye protection was necessary in the situation.

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Once the dangers have been identified, employers need to work with their employees who are most at risk. Employers can use the following tips to ensure safety by providing excellent eye safety measures and more easily meet the Occupational Safety Health Administration's (OSHA) standards that require employers to provide their workers with the appropriate eye protection:

- **Require the usage of eye protection.** In most jurisdictions protective eyewear is now required by workplace safety organizations such as OSHA. Some industries are constantly exposed to eye hazards where workers should be protected from these perils at all times, and required to wear safety-rated eye protection such as goggles, face shield, helmet visors, protective eyeglasses and the like.
- **Provide the highest quality protection gear.** Polycarbonate lenses, which are found in high-end protective eyewear, provide the best extreme eye protection.
- **Protective eyewear should be customizable and adjustable** allowing employees to fit eyewear to their own faces. Protective eyewear that fails to do this will be cause for employees to remove their eyewear to relieve discomfort.
- **Keep employees' protective eyewear clean.** Inspect them regularly for cracks, breakages, loose frames or other deficiencies.
- **Conduct regular safety seminars** to remind the workers that most industrial accidents, eye-related or not, occur because of carelessness more than anything else.
- **Employ a person on-staff that can provide immediate clinical aid.** Whether a fulltime doctor or a nurse, providing expert care for the workers will go a long, long way in preventing long term eye injuries.
- **Conduct regular assessments** of the workplace to determine if current eye protection measures are sufficient and if there have been changes in the work environment that necessitate new eye protection measures to be implemented.

The LASIK Vision Institute provides laser vision correction services through the company's 31 upscale laser correction centers located in 23 states across the country. The LASIK Vision Institute uses CustomVue by VISX Technology, the latest state-of-the-art FDA-approved laser technology, in each of its centers. Procedures are performed by experienced independent eye surgeons who have collectively completed more than 650,000 eye surgeries. Pre and postoperative visits, along with patient counseling, are available at all locations. Unlike other eye surgery providers, The LASIK Vision Institute

owns its laser equipment and can offer consumers pricing significantly below other providers while maintaining a high standard of service from the best quality physicians. More information is available at www.lasikvisioninstitute.com.

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