



Why consider disposable eyewear?

By Brenda Fishbaugh

Many salon operators

aren't aware that disposable eye protection created for our industry is FDA-compliant and allowed to be used by facilities in every state – and even every country, worldwide. More disposable eyewear is used in salons than all goggle types, combined.

Disposable eye protection is made from a super-thin, shiny film. Basically a quarter-sized, oval-shaped “sticker”, its concept is most similar to a two-piece goggle style. The tanner removes each oval from its paper backing and folds it into a cone shape, according to the directions printed on the backing. A light, medical adhesive keeps the cone in place on the eyelid. No nose bridge or elastic band is required, and unlike goggles, the design allows it to stay in place during vertical tanning, or if a tanner rolls over while lying in a sunbed. There are also disposables shaped to create a taller cone that accommodates longer eyelashes, but the “fold into a cone” concept is the same.

The biggest surprise with disposables is that when formed into a cone, you can see through it, with about the same visibility as sunglasses. All FDA-compliant eye protection must provide a complete UV block, but also must allow enough visible light through to allow a tanner to find the “OFF” button on a tanning unit in case of an emergency.

You've probably noticed that you can see through goggles, too; some styles offer better visibility than others.

Unlike goggles, disposable eye protection is licensed by the FDA for one-time use – you wear a pair once, and then throw it away. Considered a Class One Medical Product, they're the same

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as cotton balls and tongue depressors. Would you want your doctor to save that tongue depressor to use for your next check-up?

The easy, one-time use makes disposable eyewear ideal for the tanner who forgot her goggles or has come to your salon for the first time. Some salons provide disposables for free and some charge for them. For example, A Total Tan salons in Indiana and Ohio offer free disposables to each customer, but sell goggles to those who want their own pair. Others, such as Sun Tan City in Kentucky and Tennessee, insist tanners buy eye protection, whether goggles or disposable. You'll find that some tanners prefer disposables for sanitary reasons – little chance of disease or germ issues when eyewear is disposed of after every use.

Another unique feature of disposables

is that they're adjustable, minimizing the dreaded “raccoon eye” tan lines. Disposable eye protection is an option for tanners who simply don't want to wear goggles. They can adjust disposables to fit their face, don't have to worry about cleaning their goggles or be concerned whether “community”

goggles were properly cleaned. The downside of disposables is that your staff must learn how to properly fold the cone, and train every new tanner how to do it, as well.

It's very important to have a variety of eye protection options, and a well trained staff who tries ALL the brands and styles you carry, so they can speak knowledgeably and suggest what product might work best for each tanner. ■



About the Author:

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training salons on the effects of UV light on vision.