

## NEEDLES THAT FLY

This safety warning was prepared by Gene Wasserman, Safety Director, Wexler Construction Company, Inc. It is a reprint from a CONSTRUCTION SAFETY RELEASE published by the National Safety Council, 425 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60611

The needle-sharp chips that fly from hammers, and from tools that are being struck, cause many eye injuries. The danger is extremely great, because the worker usually has his eyes "focused" right on his work—the source of the chip.

Hazards are further complicated because there is a general lack of knowledge about the hardness of the steel in the striking hammer and the hardness of the steel in the tool being struck.

Furthermore, there is wide-spread neglect in the wearing of safety goggles during these operations. Sometimes the operation is too small, or too infrequent, to demand the attention that it deserves. Sometimes it is regarded as an insignificant, brief operation that will be over in a few seconds.

Even after a steel chip does hit a man, unless it does serious injury, it may be casually cast off as a minor matter, and no attempt may be made to understand the cause or the seriousness of the problem.

The chances of serious eye injury are tremendous. Hammers and tools should be made of carefully selected steel, heat treated to withstand mushrooming, yet not so hard that they chip. For safety, it's better for such tools to be softer, rather than harder. Only experienced men should be allowed for form and temper such tools.

Employees should be warned about the hazards of using a steel (carpenter's) hammer on any hardened steel surface.

Since a man can't see how hard a tool is and he cannot know if it has been properly treated and tempered, the safest protection against "needles that fly" is to wear safety goggles, without fail, on all such operations.