

Success with Sunless Eye Protection

By Brenda Fishbaugh

Crystal Martin, owner of Sun Spot Atlantis of Colorado Springs, CO, is a spectacular salon owner. Her family has been in tanning for 21 years. She joined the business on full-time when she retired from the Air Force ten years ago. Sun Spot started offering sunless tans 18 years, when they purchased an early Mystic Tan blue-box auto spray-booth. The menu now includes two VersaPro spray units, two custom airbrush rooms, FIT Bodywrap, teeth-whitening, a Hydration Station, and 18 UV tanning systems. “I was a military medic for 20 years, so I’m very conscious about health and safety,” explains Crystal. “I want my guests and my staff to be healthy.” She knows that the FDA strongly recommends that mucus membranes be covered during exposure to DHA solution. “As a nurse, I understand how easily the body absorbs through mucus membranes; so, we provide every guest with nose plugs, eyewear, single-use lip balm, and disposable bikini bottoms as protection.”

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Of course, many salons offer eye protection for sunless sessions, but very few are able to get their guests to wear it. But, Crystal reports that 90% of her spray-booth tanners wear disposable eyewear, and at least 40% of her airbrush tanners wear it. How does she do it?

“Our auto-booth came with a built-in instructional video,” she says. “The video shows how to use the unit and discusses the use of protection items, which really ‘softens’ our guests. In addition, we produced our own video that we show at the front counter to explain

and reinforce our sunless procedures.” She found that a basket of free protective items in the room – as opposed to the tanners having to *ask* for eyewear and nose plugs – increases use of the protection. Crystal explains that she sells over 100 spray-booth sessions per month, and that a roll of clear, disposable eye protection for spray-tans lasts her a couple of months.

Additional motivation was provided when Sun Spot Atlantis’ insurance company advised them to get waivers for each sunless client. Crystal explains that ten years ago, an employee complained of headaches, coughs and

dizziness from inhaling spray-tan solution mist. She thought she was doing all she could to protect her staff and guests – but, she wasn’t. Now, there is more information available, and erring on the side of safety is the way to go. “Our strategy is to be the leading edge of responsible spray-tanning,” Crystal adds. “I tell tanners, ‘It’s like putting a bike helmet on – it’s not required by law, we hate it, but we all know it’s really important!’”

Yes, supplying disposable protection is an additional cost; but, Sun Spot made the decision to provide

responsible spray-tans, and that is a cost of doing business. “To add to the safety standards, we tested and purchased high-tech air filters to pull the mist out of the spray-tan rooms,” Crystal says. “Our staff wears protection, too – masks and plastic safety glasses made for spray-techs. And, we wear them when we do spray-tans off-premises, where we are away from air filtration system,” she adds. And what about complainers and tanners worried about tan lines? “Honestly, we don’t get big complainers because we all learn correct use of eye protection,” Crystal says. “If a tanner is reluctant, we offer a touch-up in the eye area with a bronzer cream; but, no one really comes back for a touch-up, and we have very happy sunless tanners,” she says.

In addition to her salon duties, Crystal is the founder/administrator of “Spray Tan Artists Forum,” the largest sunless Facebook spray-tan artist support group. If you’re interested in joining this free, closed Facebook group that has thousands of members sharing info, email CrystalRooney@Me.com. ■



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.

