

# Want to Quit Giving Away Eye Protection?

By Brenda Fishbaugh



**T**his may seem like a bizarre topic for December, but it's the perfect time to implement a change: "For sanitary reasons, we are no longer providing free community goggles starting in the New Year." If that doesn't seem like it will work with your market, read on. I share many ways salons have successfully started selling goggles, improved their bottom line and kept their customers happy and healthy.

When I joined the industry three decades ago, every salon operator provided community goggles to their tanners for free. Every single salon. Now, only 30% are sanitizing goggles, and all of this minority also sell disposable eyewear and goggles. How did thousands of salon owners make the Big Switch?

Sabrina Tan owns Healthy Glow Tanning in Chelan, WA and used several ideas from my "Making the Big Switch" article. She put a notice on her salon's front counter informing tanners that due to insurance and sanitation reasons, there would be no more shared goggles. For one month, she sold the old community goggles for \$1, and offered new pairs at a discounted price. Sabrina explained to her salon guests that she didn't want them

getting an infection if her team hadn't cleaned the goggles perfectly. With each goggle purchase, tanners were offered free snack-sized re-sealable plastic bags and rubber bands, so they could keep them clean in the plastic bags, attached to their lotion bottle. "It turned out most of my guests had been required to show their own eye protection at other salons, so it wasn't a hassle to them at all," Sabrina reports.

## How did thousands of salon owners make the Big Switch? There are many ways to make it happen!

"If they forget their goggles, we give them a free pair of disposables."

Hope Sams of The Beach Tan in Cornelius, NC reports that her salon offers a variety of goggles at different price points. "When guests asked why we changed our policy, we replied, 'we want to make sure your experience is as sanitary as possible.' When we put it that way, they didn't complain and many thanked us!"

Tracy Hortman, of the Tannery Sun Tan Center in Pekin, IL started preparing for The Switch two months prior. "I posted in every room and at the front counter, and offered a free pair with a package or lotion purchase. Almost everyone got free goggles and my sales were great!"

Daniel Geroux, of Sun Room Tanning in Onalaska, WI places a laminated mat on his front counter that shows graphic photos of eye infections. "I say, 'I don't want this to happen to you,'" he explains. "Please take care of your own eyewear and keep it clean." He adds, "The Switch article created a big increase in eye protection awareness."

"I had no trouble," says Jeana Smith, of JEMS Tanning and Travel in Ogalala, NE. "I offer many eyewear choices and from their first visit, I make sure our guests know our rule: No Eyewear, No Tanning!" Her entire staff takes the free eye protection training offered on Eye Pro's website, "so that everyone preaches the same message about protecting the eyes – indoors and outdoors."

Only three states require salons to provide free eye protection: TX, NY and PA. You can still sell in these states, but you must offer disposables or goggles at no cost. Ohio and New Jersey have both changed their policies to allow the salon to choose their policy. And, Pennsylvania is currently voting on changing the "free eyewear" law to salon's choice. A few states DO NOT allow shared eyewear because of the serious health

hazard: IA, KY and NH. All other states allow you to make the choice, as long as you require tanners to wear it.

Wanna make The Big Switch? Email [Brenda@WinkEase.com](mailto:Brenda@WinkEase.com) and I'll send a copy of my IST column on how to do it. Would you like the informative counter mat that Daniel Geroux uses? Email me with your mailing address and code IST Counter Mat, and I will mail you one! ■



**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.

