

# Making the Switch to ONLY SELLING Eye Protection

## Or ... How to go from losing money on eye protection to MAKING money on it!

By Brenda Fishbaugh



Interestingly, in salons that require tanners to buy their own eye protection, MORE tanners wear it – about 70 percent! Why the increase? The answer is two-fold: 1) They feel their own eye protection is cleaner, thus safer, and 2) Before buying their own, they were educated about why it's important.

If you decide to only sell eye protection, more of your tanners will actually wear it; so you'll be providing a great service AND limiting your liability

### Is it time YOUR salon switched to making money on eye protection?

if their eyes were damaged during unprotected UV sessions because of lack of eye protection.

When I started in this industry over two decades ago, virtually all facilities provided each tanner with salon-sanitized goggles at no charge. Now, we see only 30 percent of salons providing goggles, and most are in Ohio, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Texas – the only five states required by law to provide free, FDA-compliant eye protection.

So, now that you're convinced that you should only SELL eye protection, how do you make the change without upsetting your existing customers? Most importantly, do NOT just announce to your staff and customers that you've got a new policy ... of course they'll be upset! Ease into it by making the change over a month's time.

Here are some ideas from salons that report a smooth transition:

1. One month before: Post signs on your front door and reception counter announcing that for sanitary reasons, you'll discontinue providing goggles in 30 days. It's important that you inform your tanners WHY you are making the switch. Explain that you are aware of how infections and colds are spread by goggles (download my past IST columns to share with your tanners). Bruce Woods of No Tan Lines in Chicago, uses an informative eye-damage counter-mat from an eye protection supplier. "Once I show them a photo of "pink eye" contracted from improperly cleaned goggles, they happily purchase their own pair!"

2. Buy a variety of goggles and disposable styles and offer a free pair with any purchase. The idea is to make it easy for tanners to transition out of your "free" goggles and into a wonderful, personal pair of their own. Give them numerous choices so they can find the style that is most comfortable and best fits the shape of their eyes (contrary to popular belief, all eyes are not created equal.)

3. Make it fun, like buying jewelry. There are several high-end goggles out there – give them a choice! Lay out a variety of styles and colors for tanners to select which one they like. "At our salons, those who purchase bigger tanning packages receive more disposable eye protection or the fancier goggles," explains Debbie Brown of Valley Tanning in Oregon.

4. As soon as the transition begins, your staff must ask to see each tanner's eye protection before every session. "The question is not, 'Do you have eyewear?' but, 'May I please see your eye protection?'" shares Nyki Lamb of Purple Sunrise Tanning in Nevada. "If they can't show it, we ask them to buy a disposable pair to use for that session. We've found that the simple policy of asking to see their eye protection and selling them replacement goggles or disposables has increased their knowledge about eye damage, and significantly increased our bottom line," Lamb continued.

Premiere Tans of Jonesboro, AR changed their eye protection policy and now only sells it. Co-owner Barbara Gill reports, "The transition is very simple if you state WHY you are changing your policy and make it clear to your tanners that you aren't trying to make a fortune on the goggles. You need to make sure your entire staff is with you and no one is giving out loaner goggles, sabotaging your new program." Gill shares, "Once we explained that we had their health and safety in mind, our tanners were very happy to buy their own eye protection." ■



#### 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.

