

Faxon supports safety warnings on sunglasses

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

Consumers who choose their "shades" for style, shape or a designer's label should be aware that the sun's rays may be a factor in the early development of cataracts.

State Sen. Jack Faxon (D-Farmington Hills) introduced Senate Bill No. 390 last Wednesday, requiring stores that sell sunglasses to post warning signs about possible eye damage from ultraviolet and infrared rays.

Faxon, who queried eye experts in private practice and in hospitals, says the evidence points to higher incidence of cataracts with more exposure to ultraviolet rays.

"The public is not generally informed about what is in sunglasses and what degree of protection they afford," Faxon says.

"Some sunglasses, because of the darkening effect, deceive the eye into opening evening wider to what the eye normally protects itself from."

Sunglasses are sometimes made to

cut ultraviolet rays, but not always, says Faxon. His concern is to protect consumers who do not know the danger of the rays and aren't aware what the various manufacturers are designing into glasses.

"It's important to look to the long-term comfort of the eyes and to the most possible protection," the senator said.

"THERE'S NO dispute about ultraviolet rays hurting the eyes, but the experts don't all agree on the potential

for cataracts."

Kenneth Mahr of the Michigan Department of Public Health's Vision Center contends the issue of cataracts and sunlight is not entirely settled.

"In truth, ultraviolet rays are not an overriding issue in cataracts, but there has been recent attention," he said. "Some eye practitioners believe protection is necessary, but there will be further studies."

"This is a narrow area of research. At this time, I have no real opinion." Mahr said cataracts are a significant

problem and pointed out that the danger from the sun's rays is far greater for those who have already had cataract surgery and may have had their lenses removed.

"The damaging rays can go all the way back to the retina in that case," he says.

A Southfield cataract specialist, Henry J. Spiro, warns sun worshippers to beware. He contends recent research has proved that ultraviolet radiation from sunlight is a major factor in the formation of cataracts.

"A CATARACT is a clouding of the lens of the eye which interferes with the passage of light," he said. "As an eye disease, cataracts are a major cause of blindness in this country."

Spire said ultraviolet light can damage the retina, the delicate inner lining of the eye which contains nerve fibers essential for seeing, and people in warm, sunny climates are more likely to develop cataracts. He adds that people are experiencing the formation of cataracts at a much younger age.

Resident continues 10-year battle with city hall

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according to city ordinance.

Site plan design standards for Farmington Hills do not indicate how a property owner has to develop the retention system, said James Cubera, senior engineer for Farmington Hills.

"You must have a retention system but not necessarily a pond," Cubera said.

ALTERNATIVE RETENTION systems include a dish-pan shaped paved parking lot, underground storage barrels and roof retention, he adds.

"She (Goodling) doesn't have to have a retention pond that big," Cubera said. Goodling has one way of solving her problem.

"I'd be satisfied if we could level it (retention pond) off and use the (Tara-

bust) drain in back of us to catch the runoff," Goodling said.

Unfortunately, it's not that simple, says Cubera.

"They could legally do something about it if they could guarantee the total volume of retention could be retained," he said.

One way of accomplishing this would be to dig a deeper pond with steeper slopes making the pond narrower, freeing up more land around the pond, Cubera said.

Or, the pond could be made so long and wide that a shallow pond would be sufficient to retain runoff, he said.

"I don't know why her engineers chose the retention pond system," Cubera said. "It was probably the cheapest and easiest way of retention at that time."

But Goodling says that because of

improvements already made on the property, a retention pond was the "only way to go."

GOODLING ALSO complains that one of her business neighbors on Hathaway have retention ponds and that they are parking equipment on unpaved ground, both of which are viola-

tions of city zoning ordinances.

"I feel discriminated against," Goodling said.

"Why are we the only ones who had to put the retention pond on our property?"

Quality Paving is not the only business on Hathaway to have a retention system, says Cubera.

Two other businesses have submitted construction site plans for review to the city, according to Cubera. Both plans include the construction of a retention system, says Cubera.

Goodling says the only way she will be satisfied is if she can use her property as she perceives everyone else is.

And she won't give up her fight.

"I've lived with this for 10 years and I've been angry for 10 years," Goodling said.

"My husband says you can't fight city hall, but all I want to do is be able to use all of our property," Goodling said.

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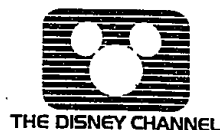
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