New sunglasses can also be used for 3-D viewing

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A model wears 3D glasses at a 3D display at the 2010 International Consumer Electronics Show, on January 8. With the hit movie "Avatar" creating a buzz around 3-D entertainment, a California company is touting what it believes are the first 3-D glasses which can also double as sunglasses.

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"We believe we're the first ones and we have a significant patent portfolio in the lens device so we believe we'll have a good bit of protection in the market," MicroVision Optical president David Johnson said.

The San Diego-based company is displaying the glasses here at the

annual Consumer Electronics Show, where leading television manufacturers have been pushing 3-D technology as the next big thing in home theater.

MicroVision Optical said the polarized lenses provide sun protection while also allowing for 3-D viewing of the most widely used 3-D movie theater systems and the latest generation of flat screen television or computer monitors.

"It decodes the content very clearly, very crisply," Johnson said, adding that the 3-D/sunglasses "should be a permanent addition to your eyewear collection."

He said the glasses, which come in a variety of styles, will sell for between 32 dollars and 40 dollars in optical stores.

"We're also working on a prescription program where you can have your own prescription 3-D glasses as well," Johnson said.

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