



Southern Building Material Association's Safety Newsletter

January 2012

"Happy New Year."

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A policy statement regarding potential violence in the workplace and assignment of oversight and prevention responsibilities.

OSHA Update: Have a plan in place for workplace violence

Being proactive about workplace violence can help prevent injuries and fatalities

A new directive, Enforcement Procedures for Investigating or Inspecting Incidents of Workplace Violence, CPL 02-01-052, sets up uniform procedures for OSHA to conduct inspections in industries considered vulnerable to workplace violence, such as healthcare and social service settings and late-night retail establishments.

Addressing the hazards

Some of the directive's general recommendations include:

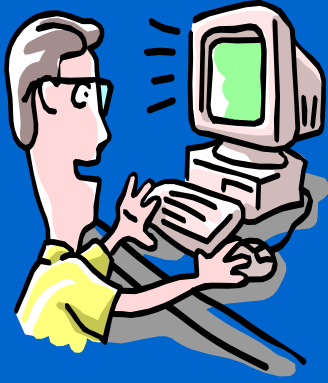
- Conducting a workplace violence hazard analysis (this includes analyzing workplace vehicles),
- Assessing any plans for new construction or remodeling to eliminate or reduce security hazards, and
- Providing employees with training on workplace violence.

Another recommendation is to develop a written program for violence prevention.

Written program

OSHA indicates that a written workplace violence prevention program should include:

- A policy statement regarding potential violence in the workplace and assignment of oversight and prevention responsibilities.
- A workplace violence hazard assessment and security analysis, including a list of the risk factors identified in the assessment and how the employer will address identified hazards.
- A description of control measures.
- A recordkeeping system designed to report any violent incidents. Maintain the written reports for review after each incident and at least annually to analyze incident trends.
- A workplace violence training program that includes a written outline or lesson plan.
- An annual review of the workplace violence prevention program so that it can be updated as necessary. Describe any mitigating steps taken in response to any incidents.
- Procedures and responsibilities to be taken in the event of a violent incident.
- The development of a response team to provide for the immediate care of



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victims, reestablish work areas and processes, and conduct debriefing sessions with victims and coworkers. Employee assistance programs, human resource professionals, and local mental health and emergency service personnel should be contacted for input in developing these strategies.

10 Easy Ways to Reduce Workplace Injuries

Increasingly, computer-related health injuries are a leading cause of workplace occupational hazards. Computer usage is common by a substantial part of the working environment all over the world.

There are ways to reduce computer-related health trauma, by observing safety measures to counter injuries caused by the office environment. Occupational safety measures recommend healthy use of computers so as to lessen the negative impact on human health.

Safety professionals are now advocating precautions in the use of computers that have become virtual standalone offices. Health problems caused by exposure to computers occur through cumulative trauma disorders connected with prolonged interaction on machines.

Common fatigue may be more than just physical stress. Stay on guard if symptoms persist after a night of rest or interfere significantly with work-related activities. If the problem is indeed work-related then you need to look for ways to adjust to your work environment and work towards alleviating workplace health problems.

Here are 10 easy steps to do ensure a healthy work environment:

1 Counter the effect of carpal tunnel syndrome of the wrist and hand by relieving yourself of the mouse and keyboard from time to time. Take breaks to let your fingers relax and enjoy hand rubs in between.

2 You need to adjust the location of work and the angle of the machine in such a way that your body continuously maintains an unstrained and comfortable position. Your arms, forearms and shoulders should be fully relaxed.

3 More often it is the continuous exposure to the computer monitor that may be the cause of eyestrain. In this case you should always have a quality glare filter fixed on your monitor screen.

4 Work with a light screen background (dark type or images on white or pale background). You'll find it is easier on your eyes.

5 Place the monitor and source documents so that they are about the same distance from your eyes. Use a document holder immediately next to the monitor.

6 Rest the muscles of your eyes by focusing on a distant object occasionally.

7 Change your body position periodically throughout the day.

8 The position of the keyboard should be at a proper level in front of you. It is important to ensure proper elbow height that enables you to type with straight wrists.

9 It's important to be completely relaxed while working on the computer. Injuries



Don't read while walking. No one saved impressive time by reading while walking, yet this is a very common practice dumb and true.



Stairway handrails have its reason for being.

and pain can be a problem if you remain constantly tensed as that affects the muscles of the neck and shoulders.

10 A good chair significantly reduces the risk of lower back pain or injury. An ergonomic chair provides comfortable lumbar support and allows for a variety of seated postures.

Workplace Safety Tips To Promote Safety In The Office

Accidents happen in the office, not as frequent compared to the shop floor maybe but when it does, it is just as serious. Tripping, slipping, and falling ranks second to automobile accidents nationwide. Well okay it did not all happen in the office. Accidents of this nature happening in the office are a big part of incidences though. The good part is that most of these are prevented from happening with a few simple tools and reminders.

Keep the walkway clear.

Boxes and bundles, cables, wires and items carelessly piled are tripping hazards. Most times, these are just oops events, other times they are not.

Look before you sit.

Incidents of someone missing the seat often promote silent giggles but this actually could happen to anyone who would not take the time to reach for the chair before sitting down. Leaning back on the chair could end with your back to the floor. This is common to people who are thinking or are trying to reach something, misjudging balance. The person may pick himself or herself up as quietly as possible with nothing serious but an injured ego, sometimes though it does not end up as happily.

Even with all the computerization in the office, filing cabinets are still in much use. Nothing very wrong here except that filing cabinets are heavy. Opening all drawers of the cabinet at the same time tips the balance of the cabinet towards you. Likewise, leaving a drawer open is a bump waiting to happen.

Don't read while walking.

No one saved impressive time by reading while walking, yet this is a very common practice dumb and true. If you have to read while walking, be sure that no one is doing the same thing that you do. If you must, do not walk into the direction of the coffee station.

Don't carry anything higher than your eye level.

Carrying loads higher than the eye level impresses no one. See how people refuse to walk towards you?

Do not run, relax.

Running may save a few seconds, after that you will take a breather for several minutes more.

Refrain from putting anything atop cabinets.

Cabinet drawers are for storing supplies. The top of the drawers is not.

Use the handrails.

Stairway handrails have its reason for being. Use it. People who do not use the handrail tire easy.

Use the elevator whenever necessary.

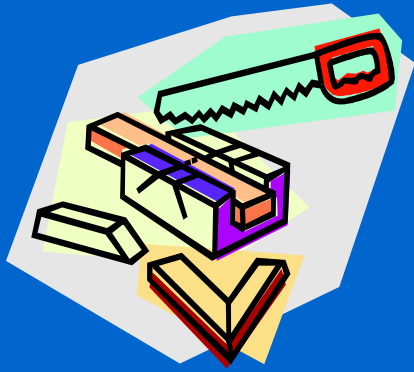
When carrying loads, wait for the elevator. The stairs are not worth the extra calories that you will burn.

Watch where you step.

Smooth surfaces are not always safe surfaces to step on especially in darkened aisles. Water could be dripping. Be safe. As they used to say, watch your step, this is truer when there is poor lighting.

Don't eat at your workstation and in front of your computer.

Eating in the workplace saves time. Be sure though that it is not done near



A workshop is only as safe as you make it.



Have reliable support for all your equipment.



We can't stress it enough – work safety is your own responsibility.

computers and other electrical equipment. Accidents caused by water must be avoided at all cost.

Other simple measures that are taken that could go a long way in promoting workplace safety is reporting unsafe conditions, loose steps, burned out lights, defective equipment, and overloaded sockets. The list is long. The benefits though are immense.

Tips for Proper Workshop Safety

A workshop is only as safe as you make it. One must ensure proper workshop safety since ultimately you are responsible for the safety of the personnel. Even a home workshop requires that you take care of safety measures. Here are a few ground rules.

Keep the workshop as clean as you possibly can. Of course, a workshop is used for a number of uses and it can easily get cluttered. Make it a habit to organize on a daily basis. Even just putting tools and apparatus away in proper places would be a great beginning.

Next, remember to keep all combustible items away from spark-producing activities. All inflammable articles must be away from your welding table. Keep a fixed place to store your gas can. Paint and glass can be damaged by sparks from a grinder so keep these away from spark-producing equipment as well.

Remember to wear safety goggles and face shield when grinding or using cutting tools. Never put off this safety essential that can prevent you from serious injury. Wearing them ensures you never have to go to the emergency room.

Have reliable support for all your equipment. This prevents objects from falling and causing painful injuries. Maintain organization and control of your work space.

Take care of sudden interruptions in the form of kids, pets or friends who might just walk into your workshop. Make arrangements to keep such safe so that there are no hazards. Visualize and plan your projects with a view to avoid accidents.

Ensure the usefulness of your tools in that they are up to the mark and ready for use. It can be quite frustrating to find out that a tool is not working when you need it to work.

You should also stay focused on the job with a great deal of concentration so as to ensure things do not go wrong. If you are not feeling up to it leave the job for another time. Follow your intuition and instinct.

You must also keep all precautions in mind when you undertake a job with inherent serious risks involved. Never imbibe alcohol when you are going to be in your workshop. You should also avoid your workshop when emotionally upset and only work when relaxed and in control of your mind and body.

Miscellaneous Work Safety Tips

We can't stress it enough – work safety is your own responsibility. Yes, coworkers have responsibilities when it comes to your safety, and employers have responsibilities and legal obligations for your safety, but when it comes right down to where the rubber meets the road, you've got to take ownership of making sure your work environment is a safe one. No one else can do it for you. And whenever you're at work, safety should be foremost in your mind. You should have the attitude that "It's up to me to be safe, and I'm going to do it". Know how to use the equipment you're given in a safe manner. Know the risks and hazards of any equipment or material you work with, and if you don't, don't work with them. If you're told to do something that is highly unsafe, refuse to do it, and explain the safety hazards involved to your boss.

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