

Clerical Office Safety

Topics

- **Lunchroom safety and housekeeping**
- **Ergonomics**
- **Electrical safety**
- **Safe lifting**
- **Slip, trips, and falls**
- **Emergency evacuation and life safety**
- **Parking lot safety**

Lunchroom Housekeeping

- Eat only in designated areas
- Dispose of food and food-related waste in designated receptacles only
- Clean lunchroom one to five times a week
- Identify cleaning agents and tools to be used
 - [MSDS/HazCom](#)
- Food, Fingerprints, and Bacteria
- Clean floors, tables/counters, tubs/basins, stoves, switches, cabinets, and drawers including handles

Computer Ergonomics

- The keyboard and input device (mouse or trackball) should be at the same level and in front of the operator.
- The height of the keyboard and input device should allow the operator to position their forearms and hands parallel to the floor.
- Hands should be in a shake hand position and elbows beside the employee.
 - Achieve this by adjusting the height of the chair and/or table, or by using an adjustable tray.

Ergonomic Self Quiz

- Yes / No Are your shoulders and upper arms relaxed and roughly perpendicular to the floor (not stretched forward or elevated)
- Yes / No Are your arms and elbows held close to your forearms, wrists and hands held straight and parallel to the floor (not pointing up or down)
- Yes / No When using your keyboard are your forearms, wrist and hands held straight and parallel to the floor (not pointing up or down)
- Yes / No Are your keyboard and other input devices, such as a mouse, positioned within a comfortable distance of each other
- Yes / No Is your input device easy to activate and correctly sized for your hand

Ergonomic Self Quiz

Yes / No Keyboard/input device platform is stable and large enough to hold keyboard and input device

Yes / No Input device is located right next to keyboard so it can be operated without reaching

Yes / No Input device is easy to activate and shape/size fits hand of specific employee (not too big/small)

Yes / No Wrists and hands do not rest on sharp or hard edge

Simple Stretches

If you use a computer for long periods during the workday, you can reduce your chances of injury by taking short rest breaks (30 seconds – 2 minutes) after each hour of work.

Doing simple stretches will reduce strain and allow your body to relax.



Electrical Outlet Safety

- Make sure outlets are in proper condition and working order.
- Check for any hot or discolored outlet wall plates.
- Replace any missing or broken wall plates.

Electrical Power Cords

- Make sure all power cords are in good condition, not frayed, cracked, or cut.
- Do not place power cords in high traffic areas or under carpets, rugs, or furniture.
- Make sure appliances are turned off before connecting cords to outlets.
- Never force a plug into an outlet.

Electrical Extension Cords

- Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; they are not intended as permanent household wiring.
- A heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs.
- Make sure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and meet or exceed the power needs of the appliance or tool being plugged into it.

Power Strips and Surge Suppressors

- Be sure you are not overloading the circuit.
- A heavy reliance on power strips is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs.
- Install ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) for protection against electrocution.
- GFCI's provide the best available protection against severe shock and electrocution.

Proper Lifting Technique

- Position your feet for balance
 - Place one foot slightly ahead of the other
 - Shoulder width apart
- Bend your knees and keep your back as straight as possible.
- Avoid touching the floor with both knees when picking up an object.
- Make sure you have a firm grip on the object.

Proper Lifting Technique

- Keep your arms and the object close to your body at waist level.
- Bend your knees and let your leg muscles do the work of lifting.
- Turn with your feet, avoid twisting at the waist.
- If necessary, get someone to help you.
- Remember that the muscles in your legs are stronger than the muscles in your arms and back.

Examples of Proper Lifts



Squat Lift



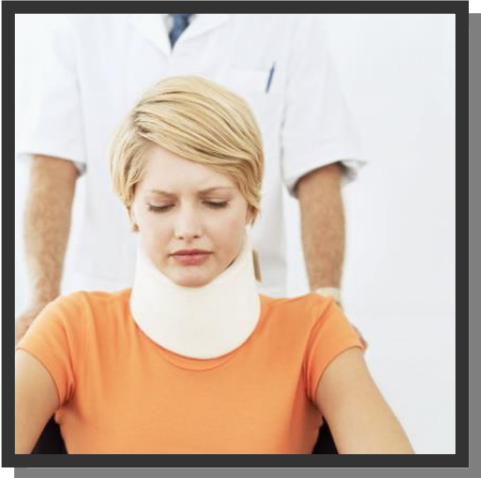
Power Lift

Slips, Trips, and Falls

- Slips
 - Occur when there is too little friction between a person's feet and the walking surface.
 - May be caused by ice, oil, water, cleaning fluids, other slippery substances, inappropriate flooring, or unsuitable footwear.
- Trips
 - Occur when a person's foot contacts an object and they are thrown off balance.
 - Main causes include something in a walkway, object which projects into the walkway, poor lighting, and uneven walking surfaces.
- Falls
 - Can be caused by a number of things, such as slips and trips.
 - Commonly caused by improper use of ladders.

Statistics

- Slips, trips, and falls are one of the leading accidents in the workplace, accounting for 20% of all nonfatal injuries.
- Slips, trips, and falls onto the same level account for 15% of all occupational injuries.
- Slips, trips, and falls are second only to automobile accidents in causing personal injury.
- Slips, trips, and falls affect professional, technical, and clerical workers and rank third overall in lost workdays.
- On stairways alone, falls result in almost two million disabling injuries annually.



Prevention

- Take your time and pay attention to where you are going.
 - Adjust your stride to a pace that is suitable for the walking surface and the tasks you are doing.
- To prevent slips, avoid walking in areas which pose slipping hazards, if possible.
- If you must walk through a wet area, walk with the feet pointed slightly outward, and make wide turns at corners.
- Always clean up spills promptly.

Prevention

- If an area is a chronic problem, re-route foot traffic to avoid it.
- If flooring is a problem, replace it or coat it with a non-slip surfacing material.
- Always wear the appropriate footwear and clothing for the task.
- Provide sufficient light for your tasks.
- Don't risk serious injury by taking shortcuts. If you are working on a ladder elevated platform, make sure you know the requirements for using them safely.

Emergency Evacuation - Preparedness

- More than one means of emergency egress
- Posted evacuation routes
- Sufficient and working fire suppression systems and extinguishers
- Head counts
- Meeting places
- Proper training including drills

Parking Lot Security

- We sometimes suspend our good judgment when it comes to parking our car and this can jeopardize our safety. So, remember to:
 - Park in well lit areas.
 - Know your surroundings and be aware of everything and everybody.
 - Travel in groups or while other people are in the area.
- Know the parking lot that you are parked in.
- Before you enter your vehicle, look inside. Make sure there's no one in the vehicle.
- If at anytime you feel insecure about walking to your car, contact the security officer and have them walk you out.

In Summary

- Sanitation is a housekeeping as well as safety issue
- The clerical environment contains repetitive stress sources of injury and illness
- Electrical safety includes proper use and maintenance of equipment
- Soft tissue injuries due to unsafe lifting practices are an area of concern
- How do we prevent slip, trip, and fall injuries?
- Awareness is key in protecting yourself in the parking lot before and after work.