

MSU-ES Dawg



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Safety Tips: Avoid Office Injuries



We tend to look at office work as a lighter type of work and although it requires effort and some physical abilities, it is not as strenuous as other fields of endeavor. We need to take the same precautions in an office atmosphere as we do in other areas of endeavor. Carelessness and non-focus can result in an accident or injury in an office as in the field.

We shall look at some of these areas that can cause a problem and see how we can greatly reduce this possibility --

FALL HAZARDS:

Falling is the most common office accident and results in numerous and disabling injuries.

Common causes of office falls are --

- Tripping over open drawers or file drawers
- Bending while seated in an unstable chair
- Tripping over electrical cords or wires
- Using a chair to reach upper shelves instead of a ladder
- Slipping on wet floors
- Tripping over loose carpet or broken tiles or concrete
- Tripping over objects stored in a hallway or walkway
- Tripping because of poor lighting.

We can prevent or greatly reduce these types of accidents if we train our people to --

- Always close drawers completely after each use
- Don't run in the office
- Be sure that walkways are clear of any obstruction
- Always keep aisle ways and exits open
- Avoid excessive bending, twisting or leaning backwards while you are seated
- Keep electrical cords out of the floor or cover them with an electrical strip
- Always use a ladder and not a chair for reaching
- Clean up spills immediately
- Report loose carpet, broken tiles or broken concrete to your supervisor
- Wear stable shoes
- Do not carry anything that obstructs your vision

If you feel yourself falling, try to hit on your shoulder and roll. You are most likely to absorb more of this impact than falling straight. Don't reach out with a hand or arm to break your fall, as it may result in a broken limb or hand.

OFFICE INJURIES:

Offices, as a rule, do not require heavy lifting, especially heavy objects. However, small objects such as books or boxes of computer paper lifted incorrectly can cause a serious injury. Many back injuries are the result of using incorrect techniques for lifting.

Following are some tips that, if practiced, will help you avoid a debilitating back injury --

- Look at the object to lift; if you have any doubt that it is too heavy or cumbersome, ask for help. (Forget your pride or independence. It sometimes can get you in trouble.)
- Use your legs and not your back. The leg muscles are larger and better positioned over the hips and knees to lift safely.
- Position your hips and feet toward the object you are lifting or moving. Try to avoid twisting the body.
- Maintain the natural curves of the neck, upper and lower back while lifting.
- Keep objects close to the body to reduce the strain on the spine.
- Push – don't pull. Pushing places the legs in a natural position to do the work. Pulling forces the back into a bending position.
- Squat and stand to pick up from the floor. Bending from a seated position and then sitting places an extreme strain on your back. The chair may be unstable and slip; so when you get up, move the chair away from where you are starting to lift.

TIPS TO AVOID BACK INJURIES:

- Avoid twisting when lifting a load. If twisting is a part of your workload, ask the supervisor to consider a job revision to alleviate some of the twisting.
- Try to rotate your tasks from periods of standing to those of moving or sitting.
- Store materials at knee level, not on the floor.
- Avoid carrying heavy objects for long distances. Use a hand truck or cart to move materials.

TIPS FOR GOOD HOUSEKEEPING:

- Avoid stacking boxes and papers on top of the file cabinets.
- Stack materials in such a way that they will be uniform in size and stack.
- Store heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Keep walkways, archways, and stairs clean of any obstruction.
- Keep circuit boxes clear of any obstruction.
- Keep all circuit boxes open and free of anything that might cause them to be cluttered and don't allow anything to be closer than 18 inches underneath the sprinkler.

**SAFETY RULES ARE THE
BEST RULES!**

OUR GOAL - NO