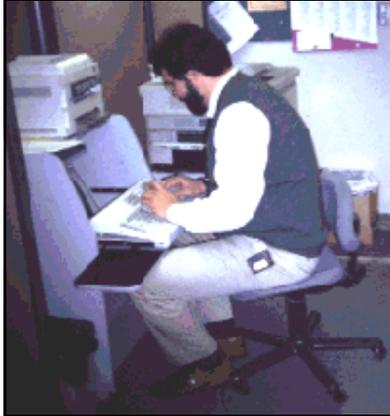




Office Safety



Office Safety... Important?

New technology and automation of office equipment has brought many changes to the American workplace in the last twenty years. These changes have also brought with them a set of health and safety concerns. In addition to obvious hazards such as slippery floors or an open file drawer, a modern office may contain hazards such as poor lighting, noise, poorly designed furniture, and equipment and machines that emit gases and vapors when not properly maintained. The very nature of office work itself has produced a whole host of stress-related symptoms and musculoskeletal strains.

Falls are a common office accident which can result in disabling injuries. Common causes of office falls are tripping over an open desk or file drawer, bending while seated in an unstable chair and tripping over electrical cords or wires.

Strains and Over-exertions do occur in office environments even though a typical office job does not involve lifting large or especially heavy objects. Small, light loads (i.e., stacks of files, boxes of computer paper, books) can wreak havoc on you back, neck, and shoulders if you use your body incorrectly when you lift them.

Impact is another common hazard in office settings. Bumping into doors, desks, file cabinets, and people while walking happens. It is important to pay attention at all times to where you are walking, properly store materials in your work area and never carry objects that prevent you from seeing ahead of you. Objects such as office supplies sliding from shelves, cabinet tops, or doors that open suddenly from the other side injure office employees every day.

Material Storage is another important item. Office materials that are improperly stored can lead to objects falling on workers, poor visibility, and create a fire hazard. A good housekeeping program will reduce or eliminate hazards associated with improper storage of materials.

Workstation Ergonomics is about fitting the workplace to the workers by modifying or redesigning the job, workstation, tool, or equipment. Common complaints from incorrect computer workstation setups includes neck, shoulder, back, arms, hands, and eye issues.

Other Considerations include indoor air quality, ventilation, lighting, noise, electrical, and fire.

Prevention of These Hazards!

To learn how to prevent these hazards take the online classes offered on Office Safety and Office Ergonomics (see left column). Also visit our website for additional information, tools, and checklists at:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/flg/gUZ1mcccoccupational/index.html>

**Online Training available:
Office Safety and
Office Ergonomics**

- <http://www.uwyo.edu/raining/index.html>
- call us at 766-3277
- e-mail uwehs@uwyo.edu

Safety: It's Our Job...
It's YOUR Job