

UMS Safety Support Updates, News, and Other Topics of Interest

June 2014



Topics in this newsletter:

- This Month's Topic Reminder – Office Safety
- Challenge Question of the Month
- Spot the Safety Violation

This Month's Topic Reminder – Office Safety

Office Safety... it's not just about computers!

When thinking about office safety, most people generally think about ergonomics and muscular skeletal disorders (MSD) relating to their workstation setup. But employees maybe be exposed to other types of office hazards such as:

Type of hazard:	Some examples include:
Slips, trips and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spilled liquid • slippery floor from weather • open file cabinet drawers • materials in walkway • loose rugs, mats, floor tiles
Electrical hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extension cords piggy-backed or other unauthorized use • overloaded circuits • insufficient grounding • exposed wiring (e.g., outlet plate covers)
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • off-gassing of new furnishings or carpet • poor ventilation
Storage areas, file cabinets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • file cabinets risk of tipping • overloaded and unstable book cases /shelving
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor quality or insufficient lighting • glare, or shadows that cause eyestrain
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noise from printers, office machines, telephones, conversations, proximity to other type work areas
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • printers, copiers, electric hole punches, paper shredders, paper cutters, etc.

Safety glasses.

All in favor, say
"Eye"

As you can see, office spaces are not immune from hazardous conditions. Maintaining a safe office environment requires paying attention to ergonomic hazards, but also physical and environmental,

hazards. A safe, well designed office allows employees to work comfortably and lowers the risk of employee injuries.

But we don't want to forget about ergonomic hazards, so here's a reminder about computer workstations. According to Maine law, if your employees operate a computer more than four (4) hours a day on most days, then computer workstation training is required initially and annually thereafter. The University of Maine Safety and Environmental Management has a Computer Workstation on-line training course available for use listed on our Training page at <http://sem.umaine.edu/safety-training/catalog/>

For various posters relating to ergonomics (or a choice of other safety related topics) please go to our Media web page at <http://sem.umaine.edu/mediaandresources/>. These posters 8 ½" x 11" PDF format, and can be printed using standard color printers.

If you need assistance in developing your office safety checklist or program, please give us a call at 581-4055. We're happy to help.

Challenge question of the month...

What is the minimum clearance below sprinklers that must be maintained free from materials as to not impede the spray?

Answer: 18 inches

Spot the Safety Violation: Or subtitled ... What were they thinking?

- Hearing protection... check
- Skill saw with guard... check
- Ripping into his colleague's... pants.... check



Disclaimer: This image was obtained from the internet – these are not UMS employee or work areas.