

## news & notes

### KICK THE HABIT!

This year's Great American Smokeout takes place on November 17. If you need extra incentive to kick the habit, read on.

There are more than 4,000 chemicals in cigarette smoke—some of which are also in wood varnish, the insect poison DDT, nail polish remover, arsenic, and rat poison. If that's not reason enough to quit, here are more good reasons:

- ☞ **You'll feel healthier right away**, and you'll be healthier for the rest of your life, which may be longer because you quit smoking.
- ☞ **You'll have more energy** and better focus.
- ☞ **You'll have a better sense of smell** and taste.
- ☞ **You'll have whiter teeth** and fresher breath.
- ☞ **You'll cough less** and breathe better.
- ☞ **You'll lower your risk for cancer**, heart attack, strokes, early death, cataracts, and skin wrinkling.
- ☞ **You'll feel more in control** of your life.
- ☞ **You'll have more money**. Think about how much you spent on cigarettes last year. Or how much you've spent during all the years you've smoked. You could have bought something *really* good with all that money gone up in smoke.
- ☞ **You won't have to worry about when you'll get to smoke next** or what to do when you're in a smoke-free place.

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There are two ways to get something done: the safe way or the risky way.  
Please, always choose the safe way.

## MOC Safety and Environmental Management

# SafetyWorks

Marine Operations Center

November 2005

## At Risk for Diabetes?

### More and more Americans are

November is National Diabetes Month because this disease has become a serious health problem in America. Today over 18 million Americans have diabetes, although according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), some 5 million of them don't know it. The disease strikes men and women about equally (8.7 percent of men and women over the age of 20 have diabetes).

Diabetes is a disease in which blood glucose levels are elevated. Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose, or sugar, for our bodies to use for energy. The pancreas makes a hormone called insulin to help glucose get into body cells. When you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use its own insulin as well as it should. This causes sugar to build up in your blood.

Medical experts say that people can delay and possibly prevent the disease by losing a small amount of weight (5 percent to 7 percent of total body weight) through 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week and healthier eating.

The CDC recommends everyone aged 45 or older get tested for diabetes. People under the age of 45 should be tested if they have these risk factors:

- ☒ Overweight
- ☒ Parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- ☒ African American, Native American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, or Hispanic American heritage
- ☒ Blood pressure measuring 140/90 or higher
- ☒ Abnormal cholesterol with HDL ("good") cholesterol at 35 or lower, or triglyceride level at 250 or higher.
- ☒ Physical inactivity—exercising fewer than three times a week.

Diabetes symptoms include:

- ☒ Frequent urination
- ☒ Excessive thirst
- ☒ Unexplained weight loss and extreme hunger
- ☒ Sudden vision changes
- ☒ Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- ☒ Feeling very tired much of the time
- ☒ Very dry skin
- ☒ Sores that are slow to heal
- ☒ More infections than usual





# Workplace Violence

## Prevention is the cure

We live in a violent society and some of that violence finds its way into the workplace. One sixth of violent crimes occur in the workplace—nearly 2 million incidents a year. Tens of thousands of Americans are assaulted at work each week—often by people they know—and some die.

Our intention in telling you this is not to scare you, but to encourage you to take these security steps:

1. Follow our company's security procedures and take advantage of our security systems.
2. Report unauthorized strangers—including people loitering in parking areas or outside the building—to security personnel.
3. Meet visitors in the lobby and escort them to their destination.
4. Send strange or unexpected packages or letters to security—don't open them.
5. Closely guard all security information, access codes, keys, etc.
6. Arrange a danger signal or code phrase to alert co-workers to trouble.
7. Take threats or harassment seriously and report them to your supervisor.
8. Let someone know when you are working late and stay near a phone.
9. Report security problems, such as burned out lights, broken locks, malfunctioning security systems, etc.
10. Be careful when commuting or when your job takes you on the road.

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### YOUR EYE PROTECTION NEEDS HELP

Safety glasses or goggles help protect your vision. But protective eyewear can only do its job when it:

- ☞ Fits well.
- ☞ Passes daily inspection.
- ☞ Is not fogged up (use a defogging solution to solve this problem).
- ☞ Is cleaned daily with soap or mild detergent and water (or a special solution designed for that purpose).
- ☞ Is decontaminated after chemical exposure.
- ☞ Is stored in a closed container to protect it from dust, dampness, or damage.
- ☞ Is replaced when lenses are too pitted or scratched to see through.

### NEW FINDINGS ON PAIN

A study conducted by Stanford University Medical Center, ABC News, and *USA Today* finds that more than half of Americans are limping through life with on-again, off-again pain. Back pain was the most common type of pain identified.

About 4 in 10 people said that pain interfered with their work, mood, day-to-day activities, sleep, and enjoyment of life. To combat pain, about 80 percent chose over-the-counter drugs and home remedies.

Stanford University School of Medicine Associate Professor Dr. Raymond Gaeta called pain a "hidden disease." He said it's not just a sensation. It's something that interferes with life for many people.

If you suffer from chronic pain, check with your doctor. There may be a more effective treatment than those you've tried.

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# Home Safety

## "Round the clock" safety

Accidents in the home cause approximately 20,000 deaths and 13 million injuries in the United States every year. According to the Home Safety Council, the top five causes of **fatal home accidents** are:

1. Falls
2. Poisoning (swallowing or inhaling toxic substances)
3. Fires
4. Suffocation (often involving choking on food)
5. Drowning

However, the five leading causes of **nonfatal injuries** are not the same.

1. Falls
2. Striking or being struck by an object
3. Cuts
4. Overexertion (back injuries and muscle pulls)
5. Poisoning

These statistics show that safety doesn't stop at quitting time. Practice the safety precautions you learn on the job at home and teach them to your family—whether those precautions involve power tools, hazardous substances, personal protective equipment, or slip, trip, and fall hazards. By making safety a 24/7 habit, you can avoid accidents all day, all week, and all year round.



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### CHECK LABELS FOR KEY INFORMATION

Always read a chemical's label before using a hazardous substance.

To find out the *kind* of hazards, look for:

- ➡ **Words** like "Flammable," "Explosive," "Irritant," or "Carcinogen."
- ➡ **Pictures and symbols** like a skull and cross bones for a toxic substance or flames for a flammable substance.
- ➡ **Colors** like red for fire hazard, blue for health hazard, or yellow for reactivity hazard.

To find out the *degree* of hazard, look for:

- ➡ **Signal words** like "Danger" for risk of immediate serious injury or death, "Warning" for risk of serious injury or death, and "Caution" for risk of moderate injury.
- ➡ **Numbers** like 0 = minimum hazard, 1 = slight hazard, 2 = moderate hazard, 3 = serious hazard, and 4 = severe hazard.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE TAKES TOLL

Some 36 percent of people questioned by researchers from the Hazelden Foundation, a nonprofit addiction organization, admitted that at least one co-worker had been distracted, less productive, or missed work because of family alcohol or drug problems.

If someone in your family has a substance abuse problem, get help now. Don't wait until you are injured at work because you were too distracted by problems at home to keep alert to hazards on the job.

# Office Safety

## Do's and don'ts checklist

### Do:

- ➡ Put materials away when not in use and keep file and desk drawers closed.
- ➡ Stack cartons and supplies carefully so that they won't fall.
- ➡ Clean up spills right away.
- ➡ Be careful when using office equipment, and check cords and plugs frequently to make sure they are still in good condition.
- ➡ Use proper lifting techniques: Lift with your legs, not your back.
- ➡ Get help lifting or carrying heavy, bulky materials, or use appropriate materials handling equipment.
- ➡ Report burned out lightbulbs and flooring problems, such as torn carpet or damaged linoleum.
- ➡ Be careful with sharp, pointed objects like scissors and box cutters.
- ➡ Use a ladder or stepstool, not furniture or boxes, to reach high places.
- ➡ Smoke only in designated areas and extinguish cigarettes and matches.
- ➡ Know where to find fire extinguishers and first-aid kits.
- ➡ Know how to sound emergency alarms and how to evacuate the building.

### Don't:

- ➡ Leave cords, boxes, and other materials in aisles—or in emergency exits.
- ➡ Use extension cords unless necessary or overload electrical outlets.
- ➡ Carry loads you can't see over.
- ➡ Smoke in unauthorized areas.

# Prepare for Emergencies

## Know what to do

Prepare yourself to act swiftly and correctly during workplace emergencies.

### Be alert to potential emergency situations:

- ➡ Know the hazards in your area, such as flammable or explosive materials.
- ➡ Respond immediately to small incidents, such as spills that you are authorized to clean or fires you can put out with an extinguisher.
- ➡ Don't waste time debating whether a situation is a real emergency or it could get out of hand quickly.
- ➡ Know the locations of the closest alarms, phones, and emergency exits wherever your job takes you.

### Participate in practice drills:

- ➡ Leave through the assigned door when the alarm sounds.
- ➡ Go to the assigned safe area outside.
- ➡ Stay there so you can be "checked off" as safe.

### Make the right decisions in a real emergency:

- ➡ React immediately when you hear an alarm.
- ➡ Stay calm and move quickly. Don't run or panic.
- ➡ Handle only those emergency tasks you've been assigned to and trained for.
- ➡ Follow instructions from emergency response personnel.



# Monster Machines?

## Not if you take the proper precautions

Machines are a major cause of work injuries. Many of those injuries are very serious, including crushed or broken arms and legs, amputated hands and fingers, burned skin, and blinded eyes. In addition, machines can cause electrical shocks and hearing impairment.

At the same time, you can't run a modern operation without machinery. If we did everything by hand, we'd be out of business in no time. So how can you be safe *and* productive? By taking adequate precautions, you can operate any machine safely and efficiently, preventing painful and often disabling injuries.

Working safely with machinery means:

- ✓ Inspecting machines before each use to ensure that all parts are safe.
- ✓ Making sure that machinery is regularly cleaned, maintained, and lubricated.
- ✓ Making sure that all guards and other protective devices are working properly.
- ✓ Never removing or disabling a guard.
- ✓ Never reaching around or under a guard.
- ✓ Reporting any missing or damaged guards to your supervisor right away.
- ✓ Wearing assigned PPE.
- ✓ Reporting machinery that smokes, sparks, smells like it's burning, gives a shock when turned on, or otherwise makes you think that something is wrong.

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#### WATCH FOR WAREHOUSE HAZARDS

Warehouse hazards can change from shift to shift, depending on the equipment you use, the tasks you perform, and the materials you handle. Some of the most common warehouse hazards are house-keeping hazards:

- ⇒ Materials in aisles that could become tripping hazards
- ⇒ Improperly stacked materials that could fall on someone
- ⇒ Protruding nails, fasteners, and other sharp objects that can puncture or cut
- ⇒ Large items left where people can bump into them
- ⇒ Trash strewn about that can cause someone to trip or slip—or that might become a fire hazard.
- ⇒ Water, oil, or other liquid spills that can cause slips and falls
- ⇒ Materials or equipment that block emergency exits, sprinklers, or extinguishers

Also watch for materials handling hazards:

- ⇒ Back injuries from lifting improperly
- ⇒ Tripping and falling because you can't see over the load you're carrying
- ⇒ Being struck by a forklift
- ⇒ Unbalanced loads on forklifts, hand trucks, or dollies that can tip over and fall on someone
- ⇒ Crashing into unseen objects with materials handling equipment
- ⇒ Getting a body part caught in moving machinery, such as a conveyor
- ⇒ Falls from ladders
- ⇒ Dropping heavy objects on your feet
- ⇒ Falling objects hitting you on the head
- ⇒ Falling from unguarded edges of raised platforms, such as loading docks

## Your Safety Attitude

### Are you safe or at risk?

Respond to these 10 statements by circling 4 for Always, 3 for Usually, 2 for Occasionally, 1 for Rarely, and 0 for Never. Add your numbers to get your score.

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. I know and follow all safety rules.                    | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 2. I pay attention to safety training.                    | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 3. I always use required PPE.                             | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 4. I give my work my full attention at all times.         | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 5. I follow every step in every job every time.           | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 6. I keep an eye out for hazards.                         | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 7. I ask questions about anything that is not clear.      | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 8. I report safety hazards I can't fix myself.            | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 9. I encourage my co-workers to follow safety procedures. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 10. I know what to do in an emergency.                    | 0 1 2 3 4 |

**TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### How do you rate?

If you scored 40 points, you have a great safety attitude. Keep up the good work. If you scored 30 to 40 points, you have a good attitude, but to be on the safe side, you need to answer "Always" to all of these statements.

If you scored less than 30 points, you are at risk of having or causing an accident. Don't wait to get hurt, or hurt somebody else, before you take workplace safety more seriously.