

# Office Safety



# Why are we here?

- 6,000,000 are injured at work per year.
- 500,000 workers are injured by slips, trips and falls per year.
- 400,000 are hurt in the office badly enough to lose time at work.
- Changing the way we work and removing hazards will prevent most injuries.

# What is OSHA's Standard for Office Safety?

While there is no specific regulation for Office Safety, there are several related to it including:

- 1910.1200 – Hazard Communication
- 29 CFR Subpart D – Walking-Working Surfaces
- 1910.38 – Employee Emergency Plans and Fire Prevention Plans
- Others depending on the office environment

# Course Objectives

- ❑ Proper workstation setup and things we can do to prevent injuries. Benefits include:
  - Reduced risk of Musculoskeletal Disorders
  - Less physical stress on the body
- ❑ Awareness of our surroundings
  - Reduces the likelihood of theft or violence
- ❑ Common fire and electrical hazards and how to avoid them

# Course Objectives

## (continued)

- ❑ How to recognize hazardous materials and handle them properly
- ❑ The importance of emergency planning
- ❑ Steps required for various emergencies that could occur, including evacuation, assembly and summoning help

# PAY ATTENTION

At the end of class you may be asked to:

- Name causes of musculoskeletal disorders and how to avoid them
- Position chairs, workstation and other equipment properly
- Show the proper way to lift and move a small box
- Demonstrate how to stretch and relax while working
- List ways to prevent slips, trips and falls

(Continued)

At the end of class you may be asked to:

- List ways to reduce stress
- Give signs that a coworker may need help
- List ways to prevent fires and what to do if one occurs
- Demonstrate the proper way to disconnect electric cords
- Identify hazardous materials in the office
- Explain where Material Safety Data Sheets can be found in your office

(Continued)

At the end of class you may be asked to:

- Give examples of emergencies that could occur
- Describe how to summon emergency help
- Tell where first-aid supplies are kept
- Show two ways to leave the work area in an emergency
- Explain where you should assemble after an evacuation

# What does Hazard Communication mean to you?

The Hazard Communication  
(HazCom) Standard states:

“The purpose of this section is to ensure that the hazards of all chemicals produced or imported are evaluated, and that information concerning their hazards is transmitted to employers and employees.”

1910.1200 (a) (1)

**NOTICE**

**MATERIAL SAFETY  
DATA SHEETS  
AVAILABLE UPON  
REQUEST**

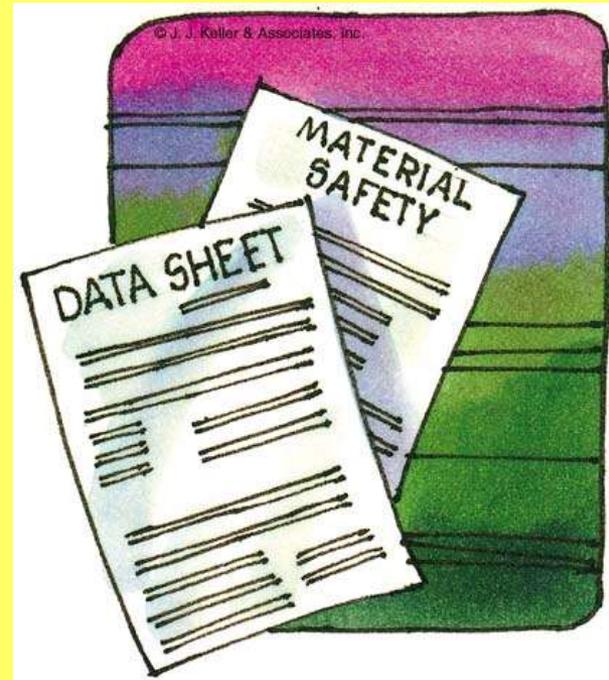
# Potentially Hazardous Common Office Chemicals

- Cleaning products and maintenance supplies
- Copier/printer toners and inks
- Special inks and paints
- Paper correction fluids
- White board cleaner
- Markers used for white boards and flip charts

**NOTE: The standard does not cover chemicals used infrequently by the employee, such as toner or whiteout**

# Material Safety Data Sheet

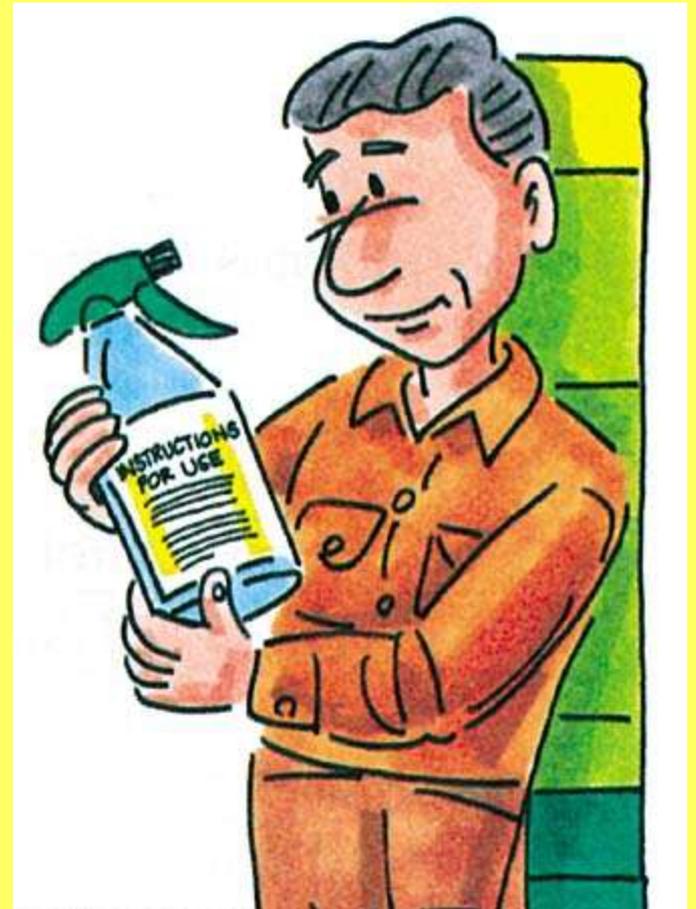
- A MSDS must be available for every hazardous chemical used.
- They must be accessible during the work day.



# Labels and Labeling Requirements

**Containers of hazardous chemicals must be labeled in English with the following information:**

- **Identity of the chemical**
- **Appropriate warnings**
- **Name and address of manufacturer/importer or other responsible party**

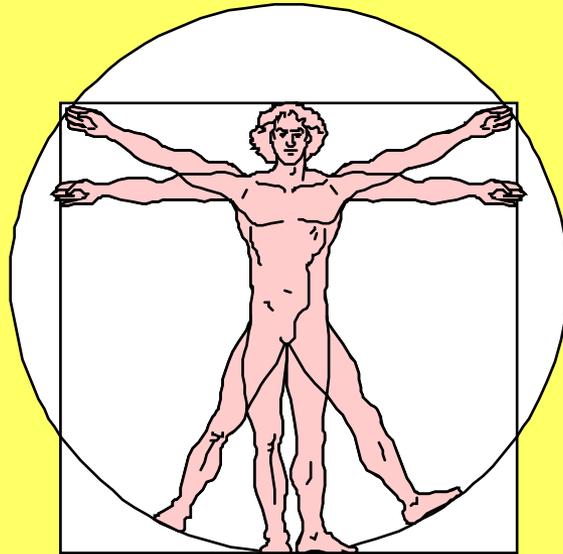


# Ergonomics In the Office



# What is Ergonomics?

**Ergonomics is the science of engineering the workplace to reduce stress to the human body.**



# Office Ergonomics



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Rex Rubenzer

**Actually, I'm worried the new office furniture is *too ergonomic*.**

- Disorders related to ergonomics stressors:
  - Computer setup;
  - Office/desktop layout; and
  - Repetitious or strenuous activities

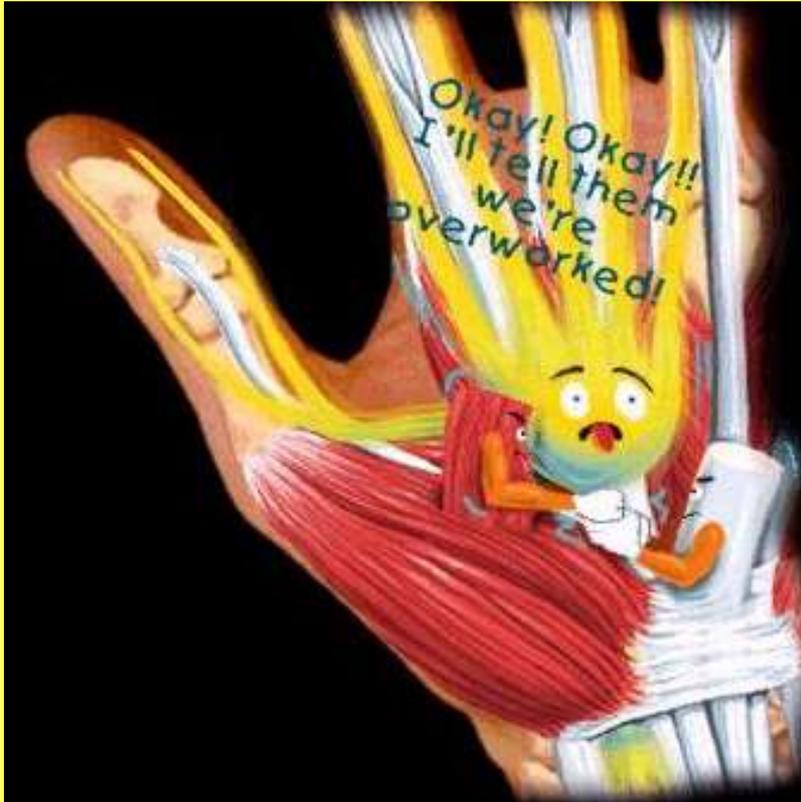
MSD (Musculoskeletal Disorders)

also known as:

CTD (Cumulative Trauma Disorders)

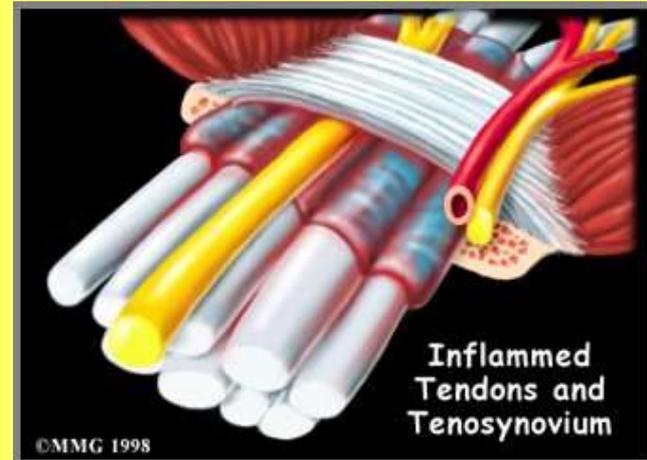
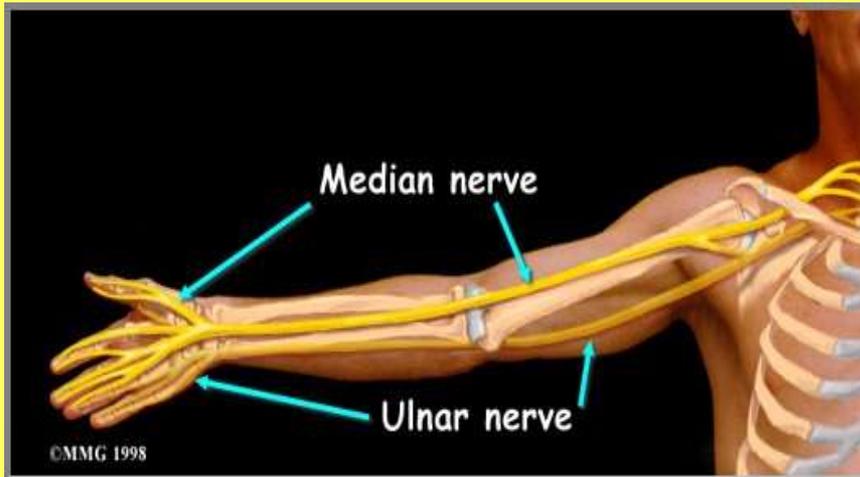
CTS (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome)

# Carpal Tunnel



- **One of the most prevalent CTD types is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.**
- **Inflammation of the protective sheath surrounding the tendons of the wrist.**

# Compressed Median Nerve



- **The inflammation and subsequent thickening of the sheathe causes the median nerve to be compressed against the tendons causing pain and numbness.**

# Other MSD Problems

- **Carpal tunnel syndrome is only one disorder caused by cumulative or repetitive trauma. Other joint areas such as the neck, shoulders, knees, elbows, etc. are vulnerable to similar problems. Symptoms are similar as well as diagnosis and treatment. Exercise and stretching can benefit the entire body.**



# MSD (Musculoskeletal Disorders)

The injury occurs to:

- Muscles
- Nerves
- Tendons
- Ligaments
- Cartilage
- Joints
- Spinal Discs

# MSD (Musculoskeletal Disorders)

The most common causes are:

- Awkward Postures
- Repetitive Motion
- Lifting
- Contact Stress
- Extreme Force
- Vibration

# MSD (Musculoskeletal Disorders)

Many times changing the way we work and removing stress corrects the problem!

The best way to prevent musculoskeletal disorders is to change the way we work to remove undue stress on our bodies.

- Learn to recognize and avoid awkward postures and positions.
- Arrange your work and your workstation so you keep your muscles relaxed.
- Move the work to you, instead of moving your body to the work.
- Try to keep your work close to your body and near waist level.
- Keep commonly used items within easy reach.

# Body Awareness

Do regular body checks to monitor for body position and muscle stress.

- Stretch and move the tight muscles in the opposite direction.
- Drop your shoulders down and back.
- Roll and refocus your eyes.
- Take a few deep belly breaths.

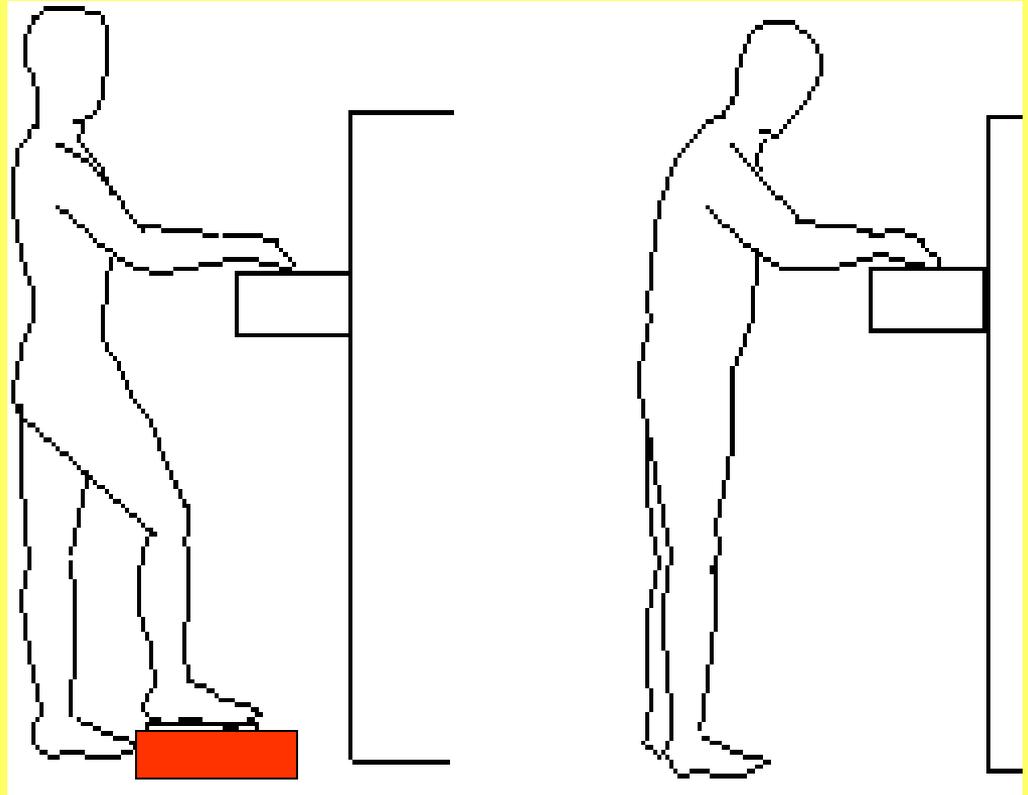
# Standing Tips

- **Avoid fatigue caused by long periods of standing in one place by moving and stretching.**



# Standing Tips

**Place a foot on a stool or bench to flex your hips and knees, relieving lower back pressure.**



**GOOD**

**NOT GOOD**

# Computer Set-up

Computer set-up is the primary office ergonomics consideration today, due to the number of employees using them.

The following aspects of computer set-up should be designed to fit you and your work on the computer:

- Keyboard
- Mouse

- Monitor
- Chair

# Keyboard

Most carpal tunnel cases originate from improper keyboard design, placement, and/or usage. Ways in which you can affect keyboard placement include:

- **adjusting desk and/or chair height (to a height that does not require your wrists to bend)**
- **using adjustable keyboard trays**
- **positioning yourself at a comfortable distance**

# Common Keyboard Problems and Solutions

<b>Long fingernails</b> (they don't let fingertips touch the key, thus wrist twist)	Trim fingernails shorter
<b>Use of excessive force</b> (keyboards are sensitive and require only a gentle touch)	Learn to strike keys more lightly
<b>Use of "Hunt and Peck" method</b>	Learn touch typing method
<b>Movement of entire hand and/or wrist to strike keys</b>	Keep your hand and wrist still, just moving your fingers

# Mouse

There are two main concerns about mouse usage:

- Placement - Should be as close as possible to the side of the keyboard to allow ease of use without too much arm, hand, wrist or elbow extension.
- Fit – Get a mouse that fits your hand.

# Monitor

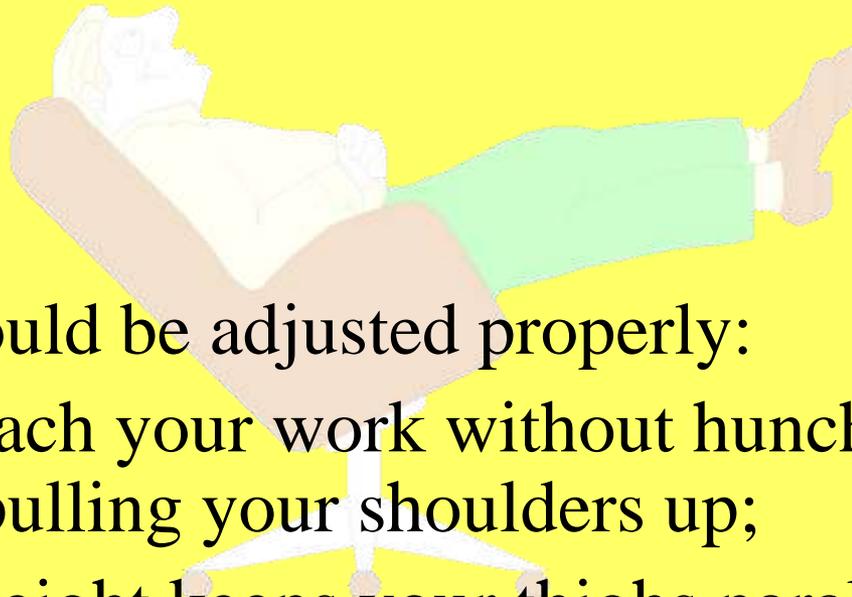
Consider the following for your monitor:

- Placement of monitor
- Quality of monitor
- Light in relation to screen
- Document holders

# Chairs



# Chairs



Your chair should be adjusted properly:

- to let you reach your work without hunching forward or pulling your shoulders up;
- so the seat height keeps your thighs parallel to the floor and your feet flat on the floor; and
- to support your lower back and keep it's natural curve.

# Tips For Sitting Properly

Remember: Sitting is much harder on you back than standing



- **Don't slouch, cross legs or sit on the edge of the chair.**
- **Use chairs that allow you to keep the lumbar curve aligned.**
- **Place your buttocks against the back of the chair.**
- **Use a towel roll on lower back.**
- **Using a footrest can relax the lower back.**

Video Time

“It’s a Jungle In There”

19 minutes

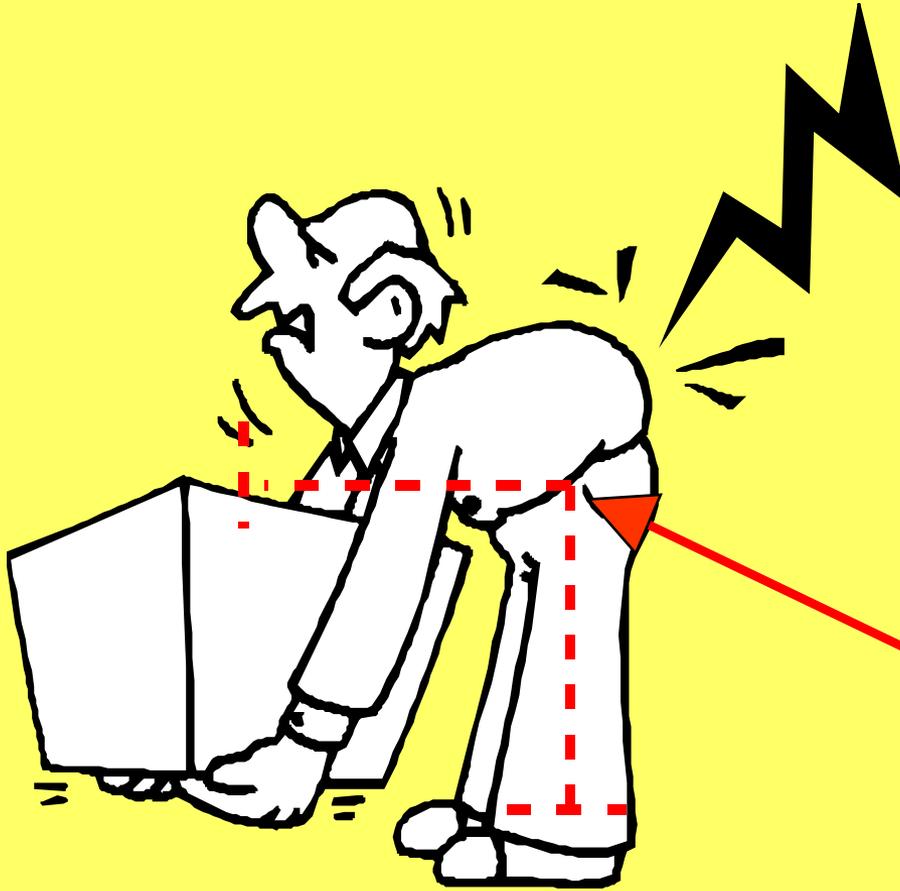
# **Back Safety**

**If possible arrange your work so you don't have to continuously bend over.**

**Always know when not to lift. Get Help! Get another person, a dolly, or a forklift.**



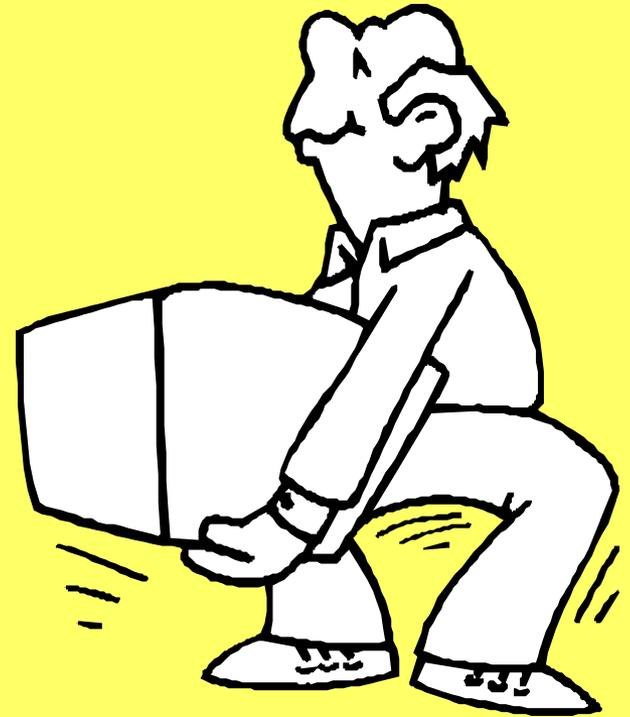
# How Flexible Are We?



**Bending at the waist adds ten times the stress to your spine.**

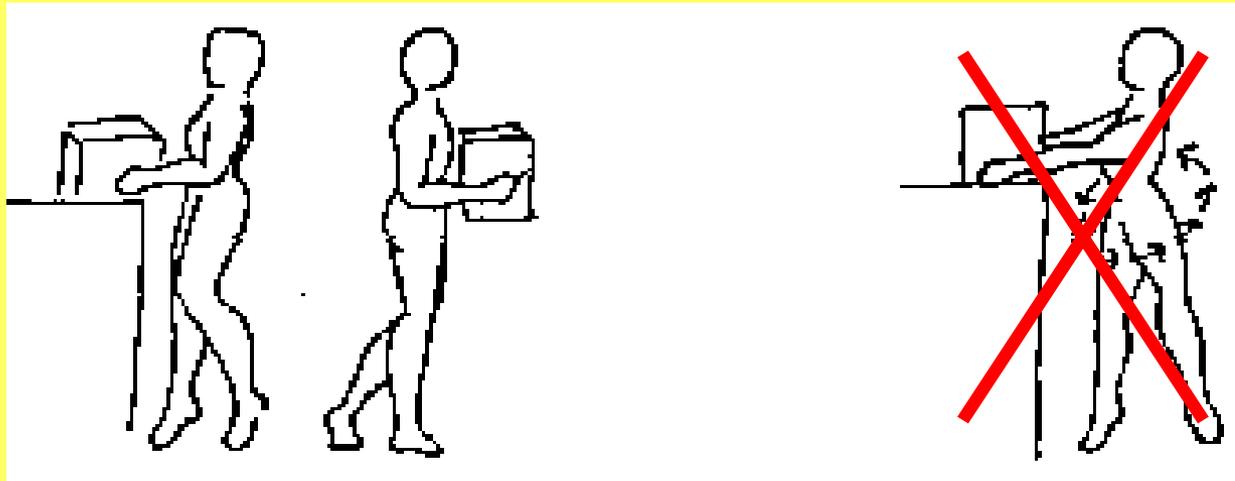
# Material Handling Tips

- **Keep your feet apart and slightly staggered for balance.**
- **Bend at your hips and knees.**
- **Keep your back straight.**
- **Keep the load *close* to your body, waist high.**



# Lift and Twist

- **Never lift and twist at the same time.**
- **Use the legs/feet to pivot - taking small steps.**



# When Helping Others to Carry

- Match equal abilities and body types.
- Agree on a plan before motion begins.
- Lift simultaneously.
- Don't underestimate heavy loads.
- The taller person must accommodate the shorter person when handing off material.
- Keep loads close to body even when handing off material.

# Slips, Trips, & Falls

Walking/Working Surfaces 29 CFR 1910.22 thru 1910.30

- **Slips/Trips/Falls account for most office injuries.**
- **An office worker is twice as likely to fall than any other worker.**
- **Account for 15% of all accidental deaths, 2<sup>nd</sup> only to motor vehicle accidents.**



# Causes of Slips, Trips, & Falls

- **Curled floor mats**
- **Uneven walking surfaces**
- **Wet/Slippery surfaces**
- **Protruding feet of cubicle panels**
- **Stacks of clutter such as magazines and/or paper**
- **Plants in aisles**
- **Extension cords**



# What happens when you slip?

- **A loss of balance caused by too little traction. These are caused by:**
  - **wet surfaces**
  - **spills**
  - **weather hazards**
  - **improper shoe type**



# What can I do to prevent slips?

- Practice safe walking skills. Take small steps to keep your center of balance under you.
- Clean up spills right away.
- Be more cautious on smooth surfaces.
- Wear the right type shoes.



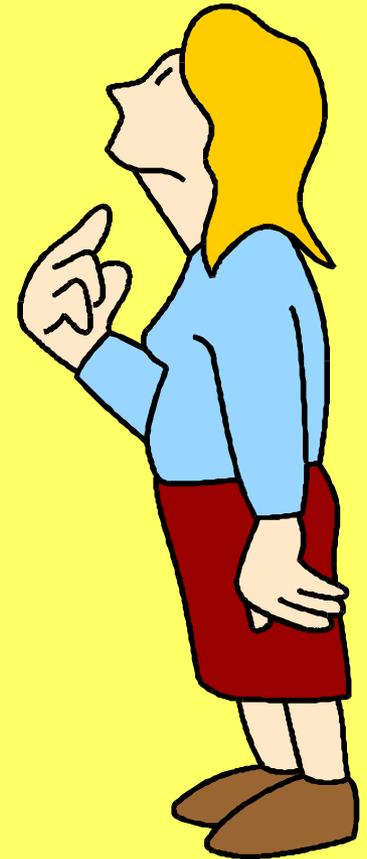
# What happens when you trip?

- **Your foot makes contact with an object and you are moving with enough momentum to lose your balance. Causes include:**
  - **Objects in the walkway**
  - **Poor lighting**
  - **Loose flooring**
  - **Uneven flooring**



# What can I do to prevent trips?

- **Look and pay attention where you are going**
- **Keep work areas well lit**
- **Keep work area clean**
- **Arrange furniture and equipment to keep walkways clear**
- **Remove cords from walkways**
- **Eliminate hazards due to loose footing**



# Falls

- Most falls occur when ladders are not properly used or makeshift climbing devices are used.
- Use a ladder or step stool for anything above shoulder level.
- Never use boxes, shelves, or chairs to reach a load.

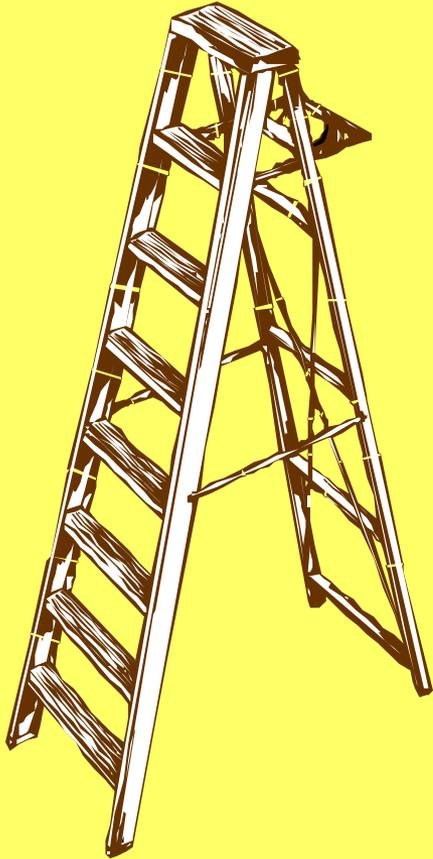


# Stairway Safety

- **Use hand rails or guard rails where provided.**
- **Avoid carrying loads that do not allow use of the rail.**
- **Rails are constructed to withstand the forces generated by holding them, not the pressures from sitting on them.**
- **Climb one step at a time.**



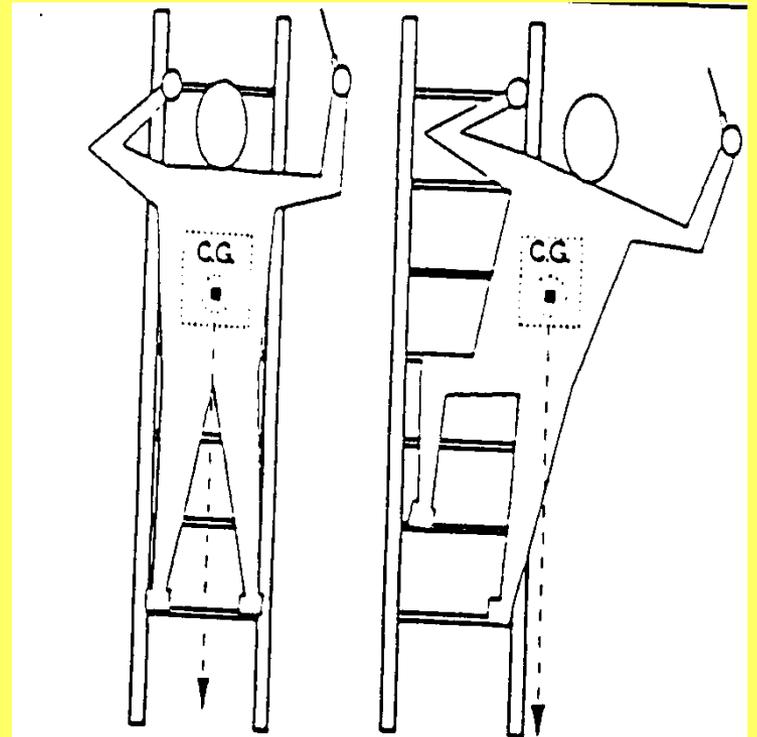
# Ladder Safety



- **Inspect each ladder before use.**
  - **Ladders must be in good repair.**
  - **Tag ladders in disrepair with “Danger, Do Not Use”.**
  - **Should be clean & dry with a non-slip surface on tread.**

# Climbing the Ladder

- **Keep your center of gravity between the sides of the ladder.**
- **Use the “belt buckle” rule. Your belt buckle indicates where your center of gravity is and should never extend past the rails.**



# Spot the Danger Where You Work and Do Something About It!

- Do not wear loose clothes or jewelry and keep hair away from moving machinery.
- Be aware of sharp edges, such as scissors, paper cutters, and knives.
- Even a paper shredder can catch hanging jewelry.

# File Cabinets



- **Open drawers one at a time.**
- **Keep the top drawer the lightest.**
- **Close cabinets and drawers when not using them, even if you're going to be gone for just a few minutes.**

# Stress



Stress management applies to everyone because stress can be attributed to stressors. Examples of job stressors include:

- increased workloads;
- new job tasks or challenges;
- customers, supervisors, and co-workers;
- getting to work on time;
- injuries and illnesses;
- budget cuts or promotions;
- deadlines; and
- the working environment in general.



# Stress (continued)

Excess stress can lead to health hazards:

- high blood pressure;
- pain, especially in joints, shoulders, neck, head and back;
- breathing trouble;
- weakened immune system;
- digestive disorders;
- insomnia; and
- fatigue.



# Stress (continued)

Psychologically we may suffer from these conditions:

- anger, frustration, and irritability;
- impatience and worry;
- reduced self-confidence;
- reduced ability to listen; and
- violence, alcohol, or drug abuse.



# Stress (continued)

...and there are occupational hazards:

- accidents;
- lost priorities;
- being rushed;
- excessive competition; and
- obsession with quantity of work.



# Stress

Some general rules can help deal with stress before it affects your work and your behavior:

- work with others to make your work environment as comfortable as possible.
- get organized – keep a list of tasks and check them off as you finish.
- take breaks – stretch and change your position regularly.
- relax you body – take deep belly breaths while you drop your shoulders and relax all your muscles.
- keep a relaxed and positive outlook – replace negative thoughts with positive ones.
- avoid taking medication to temporarily eliminate stress.
- maintain proper rest and diet.

# Security and Safety

There are many things we can all do to improve security and safety in the office:

- Lock up valuables or carry them with you.
- Mark personal items with your name or initials.
- Report all suspicious activities and situations.
- Report conditions that are safety hazards.
- Work in pairs.
- Use a buddy system when going to the restrooms, stair ways and parking lots.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Never enter an elevator or other secluded area with someone who looks out of place or is behaving strangely.

# People Problems

Behavioral changes in fellow employees could signify a serious problem.

- Depression, angry outbursts, and threats should be taken seriously and reported immediately.
- Never confront anyone who is behaving in an angry or threatening manner. Stay calm and speak softly and reassuringly as you leave the area.
- Trust your instincts. If a situation makes you uncomfortable, go to a safe location and report it.
- When disputes or problems arise, address the problem or behavior, not the person.

# What would you do if you had a fire in your office?

- It is important for you to know what to do in an emergency situation.
- Your company **Emergency Action Plan** should give you the information needed to protect yourself.
- It includes important information such as evacuation routes, head count locations, location of storm shelters, what to do in case of a bomb threat, etc.

# Fire Prevention

- Keep glues, polishes, cleaners, solvents and other flammable materials away from sparks or flames.
- Never put hot matches or cigarettes into office trash.
- Protect paper and other flammables from heaters, ovens and other heat sources.
- Never leave lit candles in your work area.
- Be extremely careful with any open flame.

# What to do if a fire occurs

- Never lock or block exit doors.
- Learn the emergency exit routes in advance.
- Call 911.
- Are you trained on fire extinguishers?
- Know the evacuation routes and meeting areas.
- Head count.



# Electrical Hazards

Electrical equipment can pose a hazard if not inspected regularly and used properly.

- Report electrical problems.
- Liquids and electrical equipment do not mix.
- **NO WET HANDS!**
- No unapproved appliances.
- Turn off appliances when not in use.
- **PULL THE PLUG!**

# Electrical (continued)

- Don't overload outlets.
- Never run extension cords under rugs or across walkways.
- Secure cords and cables to prevent tripping hazards.
- Never string two extension cords together – it creates a fire hazard.
- If you need an extension cord for more than a short time, permanent wiring is required.

# Summary

- Arrange your workstation to prevent injuries.
- Take steps to stay comfortable and secure, and avoid stress, theft and violence.
- Control dangers like fire, electricity and hazardous materials.
- Learn about your employer's plan to help you deal with emergencies.

# Office Safety

Magic from the joint efforts of the following:

- ODCTE
- Western Technology Center
- Southwest Technology Center
- Caddo-Kiowa Technology Center
- Chisholm Trail Technology Center
- Great Plains Technology Center
- Southwestern Oklahoma State University
- Imation
- Elk City Public Schools
- Clinton Veterans Center

Thanks for being here!

Please work safely!

Your local Technology Center appreciates  
your support and participation!