

OFFICE SAFETY

OBJECTIVES

- Staff will learn to identify safety hazards in an office setting
- Upon completion of presentation, staff will inspect office for safety hazards

Offices are safe place to work, but many hazards exist which cause thousands of injuries and health problems each year among office workers. Since about one-third of the work force is in offices, even a low rate of work related injuries can have a serious impact on employee's safety.

COMMON OFFICE SAFETY AND HEALTH HAZARDS

- Lighting problems can cause:
 - Glare
 - Visual problems (eye strain, fatigue, etc)
 - Poor lighting can also be a factor in accidents.
- Office Layout/Housekeeping
 - There should be at least 3 feet between desks
 - Keep all cords out of travel areas
 - Office equipment should be kept away from edges of tables and desks
 - Carpets in disrepair need to be repaired or replaced
 - Mats should be placed inside of building entrance
- Exit/Egress
 - All exits must be at least 28 inches wide
 - There are generally at least two exits provided
 - Exits and access to the exits must be marked
 - Means of egress including stairways need to be free of obstructions and it needs to be adequately lit
 - Employees need to be aware of the exits and need to be trained in procedures for evacuation in case of an emergency
- Fire Hazards
 - Store unused records/papers in fire resistant files or vaults
 - Use flame retardant materials whenever possible
 - Fire extinguishers and alarms should be accessible and employees should be trained in proper use
- Handling and Storage
 - Items should not be stored on top of cabinets

- Heavy items should be stored on lower shelves and stacked neatly
- Isles, passageways, and stairways should not be used for storage
- Fire equipment should remain unobstructed
- Flammable and combustible materials need to be identified and properly stored
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) need to be provided for each hazardous chemical identified and employees trained on MSDS
- Electrical Equipment
 - Electrical accidents in an office usually occur as a result of faulty/defective equipment, unsafe installation, or misuse of equipment.
- Office Furniture
 - Chairs should be properly designed and inspected regularly for loose or missing parts
 - Do not lean back on chair with feet on desk
 - Do not scoot across the floor while sitting in a chair
 - Never stand on a chair, desk, table, or shelf to reach
 - Open only one file drawer at a time and do not leave drawer open
- Ladders, Stools
 - Always face the ladder when climbing up or down
 - Ladders should be inspected regularly
 - The top of a ladder should not be used
 - Ladders should only be used when they are fully open
 - Always keep three points of contact when climbing up or down a ladder
- Office Tools
 - Keep paper cutter blades closed when not in use, a guard should be provided
 - Never test a jammed stapler with thumb
 - Store sharp objects (pencils, pens, scissors, etc.) in a drawer or with the point down, and never hand someone a sharp object with the point first.

POLICY

Discuss all county policies related to office safety.

CLOSING

*Encourage discussion of presentation and county policies.
Upon completion, staff will inspect office and work areas.*