

news & notes

FLAMMABLES AND FIRES

Flammable substances are so named because they can spread and catch fire easily. So you need to identify and take precautions with flammable substances.

Here's how:

- Check labels and MSDSs to identify flammable substances.
- Follow handling and storage precautions to prevent spills and vapor releases.
- Clean up flammable spills and leaks immediately.
- Remove clothing that has absorbed flammable liquids immediately.
- Substitute nonflammable materials in tasks when possible.
- Keep flammable liquids in approved containers that are closed when not in use.
- Ground containers during liquid transfer so you don't create static electricity.
- Use flammable liquids only in well-ventilated areas away from heat and fire.
- Do not place near heat or cut a container that previously contained a flammable liquid, unless it's been tested and approved for such use.

In addition, handle highly flammable oxygen cylinders carefully. For example, don't handle them with oily hands or gloves. And don't store near combustible materials.

Finally, despite all your precautions, in case a fire does occur, keep routes clear for firefighting and fire evacuation. For example, don't block exits, fire alarms, aisles, or sprinklers.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

October 2010

Provided by Hierl Insurance, Inc.

Fire Prevention Week

What you can do

October 3 to October 9 is **National Fire Prevention Week**. You can do a lot to help prevent fires in our workplace. As a refresher, remember that fire results from combining fuel, oxygen, and heat.

1. **Fuel:** Paper, wood, flammable substances such as gasoline
2. **Oxygen:** A gas present in the air
3. **Heat or Ignition Source:** Flame, electricity, friction, spark, chemical reaction

To prevent fires, keep fuel, oxygen, and heat from coming together. OSHA requires employers to have a fire prevention plan that covers workplace fire hazards and contains procedures and responsibilities for preventing fires.

Know and follow our fire prevention plan, which includes the following instructions. Practice good housekeeping to keep fuels away from heat and ignition sources.

- Dispose of waste promptly and properly.
- Keep work areas free of dust and lint.
- Keep combustible materials away from lights and machinery.

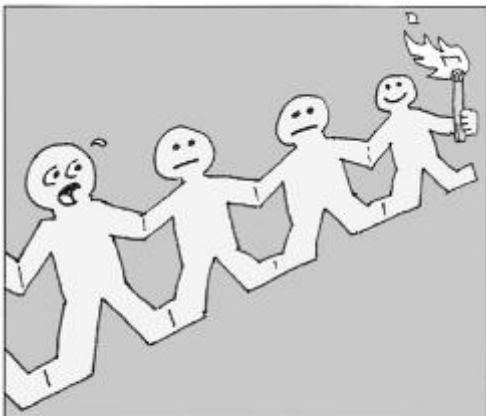
In addition, use and maintain electrical equipment properly. Electrical equipment causes the largest number of workplace fires.

- Replace cords and wires that are frayed or have worn insulation.
- Don't overload circuits, motors, fuses, or outlets.
- Make sure you have good ground connections.
- Don't run heating equipment or machinery overnight, if unattended.
- Keep bearings lubricated so they don't run too hot.
- Keep machines and motors clear of dust and grease.

Here are other ways to avoid exposing fuels to heat sources:

- Smoke only in permitted areas. Put out cigarettes and matches carefully.
- Use space heaters only when necessary and in well-ventilated areas.
 - Refill space heaters only when they're turned off and cool.
 - Place space heaters so they can't fall over.
- Perform welding and cutting operations only in separate, fire-resistant areas.

Also prevent fires that result from chemical reactions by reading labels and material safety data sheets (MSDSs) so you don't use or store incompatible substances together. See sidebar for more fire prevention precautions.



"Hey, pass it on: Don't play with matches!"

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SEVENTH INNING STRETCH

Even if your team isn't in the World Series this month, you can still take a seventh inning stretch at work. So says Jack Bastable, national health and productivity leader of CBIZ Benefits & Insurance. "Instead of an extra coffee break or cigarette break, take five minutes to stretch. Whether it's late in the game or late in the workday, stretching can help you keep your focus and energy."

Research shows that stretching a few minutes increases blood flow and circulation, prevents injury and improves overall health. Bastable concludes: "Office workers are prone to carpal tunnel syndrome, lower back pain and frequent snack attacks; stretching helps to combat all three."

DIETARY PRECAUTIONS

Follow these tips for good health:

- Avoid fad/crash diets—a healthy diet is one you can live with happily for life.
- Limit your use of alcohol—excessive alcohol intake can severely damage the liver and adds to calorie intake with no nutritional value.
- Avoid high fat, salty snacks—and never sit down with a bag of chips and think you'll only eat a few.
- Most experts recommend no more than 2,300 mg of salt (sodium) a day—about a teaspoon.

Consult with your doctor before beginning a new diet or exercise program.

- Be moderately physically active for 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- Walking regularly can be the main element of your program, and it doesn't cost a dime.



Not Just for Kids

Adults may need vaccinations, too

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say adults need them if:

1. They weren't vaccinated as children.
2. New vaccines are now available.
3. Their immunity has faded with age.
4. Their age makes them vulnerable to diseases such as flu or pneumonia.
5. They plan to travel internationally.

The CDC also indicates that people aged 19 to 49 should receive a:

1. Tetanus booster every 10 years,
2. Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine, *and*
3. Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine.

Adults aged 65 and over should consider being vaccinated for these diseases:

1. Diphtheria,
2. Flu,
3. Pneumonia, *and*
4. Tetanus.

Adults aged 60 and over should get the Zoster vaccine to help prevent shingles.

International travelers, check the CDC's "Traveler's Health" page. Everyone, take the CDC's online quiz, "What Vaccines Do You Need?" at www.cdc.gov. Also get the "Adult Vaccination Screening Form."

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Trick or Treat?

Make sure Halloween is a treat

October is Halloween Safety Month. Take the same precautions for walking around the neighborhood at night that you follow even when it's not Halloween.

- Carry a flashlight with a strong beam and good batteries.
- Ensure young kids are accompanied by adults or responsible older children.
- Ensure older kids travel in groups.
- Follow the rules for crossing streets.
- Be careful if you need to walk on lawns, which may get slippery with evening dew as the night comes on.

Halloween traditions have certain unique safety protocols. Namely:

- Approach houses only if they have outside lights on.
- Use driveways and sidewalks; don't walk on people's lawns, if possible.
- Don't eat treats while walking; wait until you get home.
- Don't run from house to house; it's not a race and running in a costume at dusk on unfamiliar terrain can cause slips, trips, and falls.

Finally, be careful with the treats. Take these precautions:

- Check all treats before letting kids of any age have them.
- Throw out items with torn wrappers.
- Discard items that may be outdated.
- Be careful giving young kids hard candy or treats that could make them choke.
- Don't let kids—or you—gorge! Portion out treats over the next week or so.