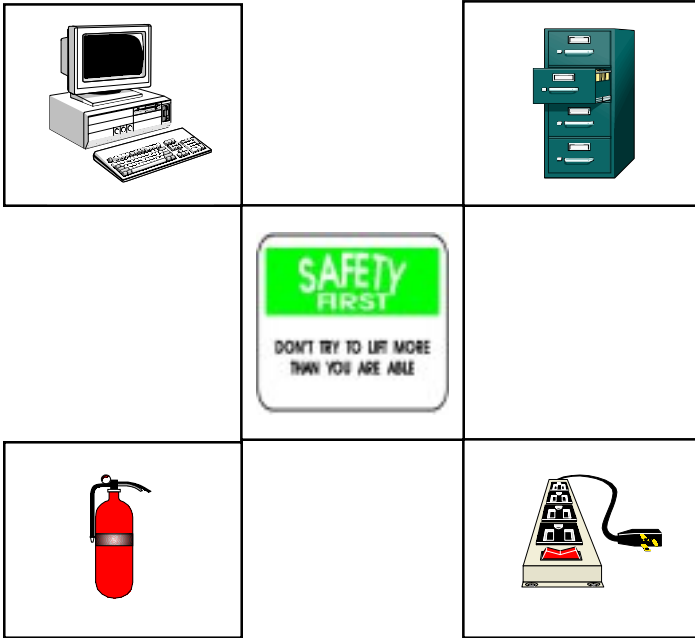


OFFICE SAFETY

CHECKLIST AND RESOURCE GUIDE



Published
by

Environmental Health & Safety
University of California-Davis

April 1999

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining a safe, healthy, work environment is important for all employees including those who work in offices. This checklist highlights the most commonly occurring office safety issues including:

- **Computer Workstation Ergonomics**
- **Preventing Back Injuries**
- **Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls**

Also covered are additional office safety concerns including:

- **File Cabinet Safety**
- **Fire & Electrical Safety**
- **Chemical Safety**
- **Safety Training**

This checklist will assist you in assessing office safety. If you answer “No” to any questions, please review the information provided following the question and take appropriate steps to correct the safety concern. Should you have questions regarding anything in this document, please contact your EH&S Safety Advisor or call 752-1493.

COMPUTER WORKSTATION ERGONOMICS

- | | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Have you completed the “Computer Ergonomics Workbook” available at http://ehs.ucdavis.edu/ergback or in hardcopy form from EH&S? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you answered “No”, please obtain and complete the workbook.

PREVENTING BACK INJURY

- | | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Is safe lifting practiced including knowing limitations, getting help if an item is too heavy, lifting with the legs instead of the back, keeping items close, and avoiding twisting when lifting and lowering? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Provide training in back safety. EH&S offers numerous training tools, classes, and consultations to instruct employees in back safety. For a listing of back safety training tools go to <http://ehs.ucdavis.edu/ergback>

- | | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • During extended periods of sitting, do you take short standing breaks hourly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The body was meant to move about, not sit for long periods. Hourly standing breaks are recommended.

PREVENTING SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS

- **If items are stored overhead, is a stable step stool or stepladder used to reach them?** Yes No N/A

NEVER stand on a chair with casters or on a counter to retrieve items overhead. A stable step stool or stepladder should be available for these times. Step stools are available for purchase through Central Storehouse.

- **Is wiring (electrical, telephone, computers, etc.) arranged or covered to eliminate the possibility of trips and falls? This includes wiring under desks.** Yes No N/A

Wires or cords should never be stretched across an aisle way or under carpeting. Under the desk, cords should be organized to reduce chances of catching a loose cord on your foot and tripping.

- **Are traffic areas clear and unobstructed by boxes, cartons, or other materials?** Yes No N/A

Assure aisle ways are clear at all times.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | No | N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Are trash and/or recycle containers available and emptied regularly?

Avoid placing paper to be recycled on the floor since it then becomes a slip hazard. This can be eliminated by having recycle containers available and emptied frequently. On campus, contact Project Recycle 752-2602.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | No | N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Are floors kept from becoming slippery and spills quickly cleaned up?

One of the most common causes of slips and falls is spills or water on the floor, especially during rainy seasons. High traffic entries should have matting available to minimize water on the floor. In most cases, departments are responsible for providing this matting. Please clean up spills immediately to prevent others from slipping.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | No | N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Are floors, carpets, and other walkways in good repair and free of tripping hazards?

Cracks and divots in flooring and buckles in carpeting should be repaired to prevent a trip hazard. For campus locations, contact Facilities Services at 752-1655 to request repairs.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | No | N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Do throw-rugs have a non-slip rubber backing?

To prevent throw rugs from sliding or buckling they should have a non-slip rubber backing.

FILE CABINET SAFETY

- **Are file cabinets placed so the drawers do not open into high traffic areas?** Yes No N/A

Consider relocating file cabinets to prevent obstructing an aisle way when in use.

- **Are file cabinet contents evenly distributed in cabinet drawers to prevent the file cabinet from tipping?** Yes No N/A

File cabinets that are top heavy may tip over when drawers are opened. Weight should be evenly distributed among drawers.

- **Are file drawers closed immediately after use to prevent strike injuries?** Yes No N/A

All employees should be attentive to closing file drawers when not actively being used.

- **Is there available free space in file drawers so employees do not have to struggle to insert or extract files?** Yes No N/A

Periodically purge files to reduce chances of hand and wrist injuries due to files being packed too tightly. Refer to P&P 320-15 for information on record retention and disposition.

FIRE AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Yes No N/A
- **Are fire alarms and smoke detectors available and in good working condition?**

For fire prevention information contact
Facilities: Fire Division at 752-3839.

- Yes No N/A
- **Are fire extinguishers available, easy to locate, and do employees know how to use them?**

For fire extinguisher information, contact
Facilities: Fire Division at 752-4268.

- Yes No N/A
- **Do you have an approved surge protector?**

Surge protectors offer additional equipment protection against power surges. Central Storehouse carries surge protectors that will protect your equipment and are approved by Facilities Electrical Services.

- Yes No N/A
- **Do you have a sufficient number of electrical outlets in your work area and are they the three wire, grounded type?**

If you do not have sufficient numbers of electrical outlets, contact your department for further evaluation. All wall outlets should be the three wire, grounded type and properly installed. For questions, contact Facilities Services at 752-1655.

Yes No N/A

- **Are power strips plugged directly into wall outlets and not into other power strips or extension cords?**

It is unsafe to plug one power strip into another, because this exceeds the design capacity of the power strip and could be a fire hazard. Likewise, it is unsafe to plug a power strip into an extension cord. Extension cords are to be used only for temporary power.

CHEMICAL SAFETY

Yes No N/A

- **Are potentially hazardous office chemicals properly handled and stored?**

For information, contact your EH&S Safety Advisor or EH&S at 752-1493.

Yes No N/A

- **Are Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) available for all potentially hazardous office chemicals?**

Departments should request MSDS directly from the manufacturer when ordering. Sources for MSDS are available through the EH&S web site or contact your EH&S Safety Advisor or EH&S at 752-1493.

SAFETY TRAINING

- **Do you understand the contents and know where to locate your department's Injury & Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP)?**

Yes	No	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Every department is responsible for having an IIPP. If you do not know where to locate your department's IIPP or if you have questions about its contents, contact your supervisor or department safety coordinator. If your department does not have an IIPP, one should be developed. If assistance is needed, contact your EH&S Safety Advisor.

- **Do you receive periodic training in office safety?**

Yes	No	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This checklist can serve as a training module for employees. EH&S also has self assessment and training tools designed for specific work environments. These are listed on the Ergonomics web page at <http://ehs.ucdavis.edu/ergback>

- **Do you know who to contact in the event of a workplace injury?**

Yes	No	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Report workplace injury to your immediate supervisor.