Safety Matters

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Be Aware, Be Safe

Do your part to make the workplace safe

Many accidents happen because people are not aware of hazards, not paying attention while they work, or not thinking that safety is important in their job. Our employer can provide safety training, safety programs and rules, and personal protective equipment, but all this can't protect you if you don't look out for yourself.

Being aware of safety means always having the right information to do the job safely—and asking if you don't know. It also means taking the time before you start working to identify potential hazards and take the proper precautions to protect yourself. And it means following safety procedures and focusing your full attention on the job the whole time you're working.

One of your most important safety responsibilities is simply to be aware of the need for taking proper safety precautions. Here's what to do:

- ⇨ Take the time to look for and identify hazards—and do something about them. Never assume that someone else will take care of it.
- ⇨ Examine the substances, equipment, and situations that are part of the job.
- ⇨ Look for unsafe acts as well as unsafe conditions.
- ⇨ Be alert to anything that simply doesn't look, smell, or "feel" right.

LET'S ALL MAKE 2007 A SAFE NEW YEAR!!!!

SAFETY AT AN AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINE (ATM)

What's more likely to attract a robber than someone at a magic money machine where 80% of transactions are cash withdrawals? No wonder that muggings at ATMs are something to be concerned about. Here are some ways to increase your safety when using an ATM:

* Check out the security/safety features of the ATM before using it. Look for a well lighted ATM that is in front of the bank instead of behind it and in a place with plenty of foot traffic. Patronize ATMs with emergency phones, alarms, bright lights, mirrors that allow you to see what's behind you, and cameras that record transactions.
* Avoid ATMs near hedges and other hiding places.
* Minimize time spent at the ATM. Have your card ready and necessary forms filled out. After completing the transaction, put everything away and leave quickly.
* Never keep your code numbers (PIN) in your wallet. Take the receipt with you.
* When using a drive-up machine, make sure all the windows but the driver's are closed and the doors are locked. Keep the engine running.
*Report all ATM-related crimes to financial institutions and police. If someone does hold you up, surrender the money and your card, if the robber demands it. Only surrender what the robber demands and volunteer no information. Try to remember features/actions/mannerisms of the robber that would single him/her out in a crowd.

RIDDLE OF THE MONTH

I come in different shapes and sizes. Part of me are curves, others are straight. You can put me anywhere you like, but there is only one place for me. What am I?

Answer on Page 2 in ***"Safety Bits and Pieces."***

News & Notes

SAFE LIFTING

One of the best ways to protect your back on the job and avoid other lifting-related injuries is to use proper lifting techniques. Before lifting, think about the job. Examine the object for sharp corners, slippery spots, or other potential hazards. Know your lifting limit and don't try to exceed it.

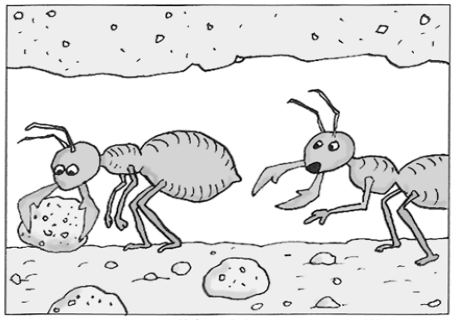
Ask for help or divide the load, if possible, to make each lift lighter. Also know where you're going to set the item down, and make sure your path is free of obstructions that could cause you to trip and fall.

Test the load weight before lifting it to make sure that you can lift the load by yourself. To do this safely, you should
* lift a corner of the load to test its weight, or
* use the "big toe" test. If you can push the item with your toe, it's safe to move it alone.

When you're ready to lift, take these steps:

1. Stand close to the load with your feet spread about shoulder width apart, with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance.
2. Squat down, bending at the knees (not your waist). Tuck your chin while keeping your back as vertical as possible.
3. Get a firm grasp on the object before beginning the lift.
4. Slowly begin lifting with your legs by straightening them. Never twist your body during this step.
5. Once the lift is complete, keep the object as close to your body as possible. As the load's center of gravity moves away from the body, there's a dramatic increase in stress to the lower back.

Don't forget to set the load down correctly, too. Squat and let your legs take the weight as you place the object down. Also remember to keep your fingers out of the way!



"Remember - lift with your mandibles, not your thorax."

Safety Tip of the Month

Are you too close to the airbag? Make sure you're more than 10 inches from the steering wheel. If you're too close, an inflating airbag could injure or kill you.

Back Safety Quiz

What you don't know can hurt you

Find out how much you know about back safety by taking this quiz:

1. Poor _____ can cause back pain by disrupting the back's natural curves.
2. Name two things to check before attempting to lift a load:
   _____
   _____
3. Lifting with your legs is necessary only when attempting to lift heavy loads. ☐ True or ☐ False
4. Back injuries are usually the result of a single traumatic event. ☐ True or ☐ False
5. Is your back more suited for pushing or pulling a load?

(Please see answers below.)

Back Safety Quiz Answers:

(1) Poor posture disrupts the back's natural curves.
(2) Size up or evaluate the load and clear the pathway.
(3) **False.** Lifting incorrectly, even with light loads, constitutes back abuse.
(4) **False.** Back injuries are usually the result of years of abuse until the weakened back gives way.
(5) The back has more strength pushing than it does when pulling.

Notable Quotation

"Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which one has overcome while trying to succeed."
Booker T. Washington

Stairway Safety

Many falls occur on stairs and can lead to serious injuries. So remember these tips whenever you take the stairs:

➔ Pay attention to where you're going.
➔ Never run up or down stairs.
➔ Use the railing to hold on.
➔ Don't carry items that block your vision.
➔ Watch out for loose or worn flooring.
➔ Pick up any foreign objects.
➔ Keep one hand free to break a fall.
➔ Report burned-out bulbs or poor lighting.

On the Lighter Side

"You know you're getting old; there are certain signs. I walked past a cemetery and two guys ran after me with shovels."
Rodney Dangerfield

Look Both Ways

Looking both ways before crossing the street is probably one of the earliest safety lessons your parents drummed into you (along with not playing with matches or running with scissors). This lesson protected you from the very real and great danger of being hit by a car. It's still an important lesson today - in the street and on the job. Looking both left and right, checking out what's going on around you as you work, is a good way to protect yourself from workplace hazards.

Looking both ways on the job means not only looking left and right but also looking ahead and back. For example:

* Safe workers look ***ahead*** when they assemble (and check) all tools and materials they will need for the next job, or when they plan the best route and equipment for moving materials from one place to another.
* Workers and supervisors also contribute to safe operations when they look ***back*** at close calls and near misses and try to figure out what went wrong and how to correct it so that a near miss this time doesn't turn into an accident next time.

Safe habits, like looking left and right or ahead and back, are one of the most effective ways of preventing accidents and injuries on the job. So always look both ways and keep safe from workplace hazards.

PLAYING WITH FIRE

Poor housekeeping is playing with fire. Always follow these good housekeeping rules to avoid fire and explosion:

* Store all flammable liquids properly.
* Keep all storage areas clean and free from debris.
* Keep motors and machines free of dust, debris and grease.

Safety Bits & Pieces

FIRST AID FOR YOUR EYES

Since January is National Eye Care Month, this is a great time to think about just how important your eyes are and to remember to practice eye safety by always wearing proper eye protection. If the worst happens, however, you also need to know how to respond to an eye injury. What you do could make the difference between sight and permanent damage. Here is a quick first aid refresher for eye injuries:

* **Specks:** Do not rub any speck or foreign body that gets into the eye. Lift the upper eyelid over the lower lid, and let the tears wash out the particle. If the speck does not wash out, keep the eye closed with a light dressing and seek medical attention.
* **Blows:** For a blow to the eye or a black eye, immediately apply cold compresses for approximately 15 minnutes every hour. A black eye could mean serious damage to the eyeball and should be seen by a doctor.
* **Cuts:** Bandage a cut eye lightly with a sterile gauze patch and get to the emergency room. An eye with a cut, puncture, abrasion, etc. should not be washed with water. Do not try to remove an object stuck in the eye.
* **Burns:** Whether caused by flame or chemicals, a burn in the eye should be immediately flushed with water for approximately 15 minutes. Hold the head under a faucet or pour cool water into the eye from a cup. Seek medical attention.

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Eye Fact: More than 100,000 people suffer disabling eye injuries each year. Do not be one of them. Wear eye protection!!!

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ELIMINATE HAZARDS

Use this hazard-elimination strategy to help create a safer work environment:

1. Conduct regular safety inspections to identify hazards.
2. Make sure you know all the hazards of your job and in your work area.
3. Report any hazards you see to your supervisor right away.

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Riddle of the Month Answer: A jigsaw puzzle piece

What's Wrong with this Picture?

(from December Safety Matters)

Answer: He is not holding onto the ladder to balance himself.