

COMMON OFFICE HAZARDS

It's obvious to everyone that factory workers, who work around heavy equipment and machines, must be aware of safety issues. But office workers must also be aware of safety issues.

→Thousands of fractures, dislocations, sprains, strains and contusions occur in U.S. offices each year. The hazards include obvious matters like a slippery floor that can lead to a fall, an open file cabinet drawer or a box in a walkway that can cause tripping, and heavy equipment that can cause back problems when you try to move it without help.

→Fire hazards can be reduced by storing papers in fire resistant containers and having fire extinguishers and alarms that are accessible. If you aren't sure about how to use a fire extinguisher, ask for a demonstration.

→Check the lighting in your work area. Glare and shadows can bring eyestrain and fatigue. Walls, ceilings and floors should have a light, dull finish.

→The stock room can be a dangerous place. Paper cartons, for one thing, are heavy and should be placed on the lowest shelves. Improper lifting can cause sprains, strains or joint problems. And, materials that aren't stacked neatly could tumble down on someone. Other factors include safe use of ladders, stands and stools.

→There should be proper means of egress (going in and coming out). Exits should be at least 28 inches wide and all exits should be marked. Aisles and stairways should be free of obstructions and well lighted.

→Consider the decor. Faulty carpets should be repaired or replaced. There should be mats at the entrances, and proper placement of electrical, telephone and computer wires.

Don't let your office workspace become a jungle of safety hazards!

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

- 1) What is it that when you take away the whole you still have some left over?
- 2) What do noon and the letter "A" have in common?
- 3) Which one of the following words does not belong with the others and why?
Father, Brother, Mother, Aunt, Cousin, Sister, Uncle

Answers on Page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Matters

Happy St. Patrick's Day

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Did You Know???

On divided highways, many bridges are not continuous from one direction of the highway to the other. Instead, they are constructed as two separate structures with a gap in the area that the median would occupy. In areas where pedestrians are not expected, the barriers on the sides of these bridges are designed only to redirect vehicles and can be as low as 32". When vehicles break down, or when there are accidents on these structures, drivers and first responders become pedestrians when they exit their vehicle. Not realizing that there is a gap between the bridges, some choose to jump or climb the barrier and cross directly to the other structure rather than go around. Nationwide, there have been multiple incidents where people have jumped over barriers resulting in serious injury or death, because they thought there was solid footing on the other side of the barrier. In the event of a breakdown or response to an accident, the driver or first responder must be aware that these conditions exist. The following are some guidelines to follow concerning vehicle incidents on a bridge.

1. Never stop on a bridge unless it is absolutely necessary. The barriers give you no place to escape from an errant vehicle. If possible, get off of the bridge and pull your car off of the road in a safe location.
2. If you must stop your vehicle on a bridge, follow the appropriate safety procedures for vehicle breakdowns or accidents.
3. Never jump over barriers. If you must cross a barrier to get to safety or provide assistance, always identify your landing area before you leave your feet or climb over the barrier. If you cannot see the surface you will be landing on due to poor lighting, do not assume it is there.

Two Delaware bridges with this example are depicted below.



View from the top
(Looks continuously across the bridges)



View from the bottom
(16" gap between the bridges)

BRIDGE 1: 262 on SR 7



View from the top
(Looks continuously across the bridges)



View from the bottom
(10' gap between the bridges)

Roth Bridge on SR1 over the C&D Canal

The above article and photographs were submitted by DelDOT

Safety Bits & Pieces

MARCH 16 - 22: NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK

Steps to take if poisoning is suspected

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has this important information for you.

If you suspect that a child or adult has ingested poison, first, remain calm.

* Call 911 if the victim has collapsed. If the victim is not breathing, call 911, then give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

* If the victim is awake and alert, call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. It is open 24/7.

* Be prepared to give the victim's age and approximate weight.

* Describe the substance. Read from the container if available.

* Never make the victim vomit unless instructed to do so by Poison Control.

* Give your address and phone number. Stay on the phone for instructions from the emergency operator. The specialist may need to call you back.

Poison Prevention

* Medicines: Turn on a light when you give or take medicines. Read medication directions. Keep medicines in their original bottles. Store in a safe place where they can't be reached by children or teenagers.

* Household cleaners and chemicals: Keep chemicals, cleaners and beauty products in their original containers. Always read the label before using. Never mix cleaning products together. Doing so could produce toxic gases. Wear clothing that covers the skin when you spray pesticides or other chemicals. Open the windows and use a fan when using chemicals in the house.

Protecting young children

Keep drugs and chemicals in childproof cabinets that children can't reach.

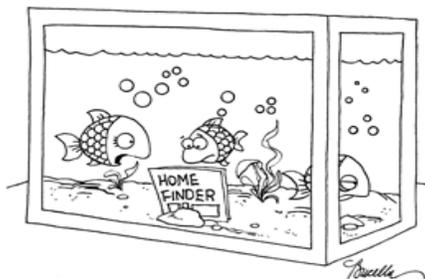
Don't take medicine in front of children, since they often try to copy adults. When giving children a medication, never call it "candy."

Don't leave your own next dose on the counter.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

- 1) The word "wholesome"
- 2) They are both in the middle of "day"
- 3) Cousins - all the others refer to a gender

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...



"I know it's tough starting out. Your father and I started out in a plastic bag."

Know How to Be Safe?

Seven questions about workplace safety

Check your safety smarts with this quick quiz.

1. Burn injuries can be caused by three different hazards. What are they?
2. What's the first thing you should do if you witness a workplace accident? What's the second thing?
3. When you lift a heavy object, which set of muscles should you use, your back muscles or your leg muscles?
4. How can you protect your hands from cuts, scrapes, or chemical contamination?
5. What should you do if you don't know whether a situation is hazardous?
6. What are two features of a machine that prevent your hands from getting into the point of operation while the machine is operating?
7. What are two steps you can take to keep from breathing hazardous vapors or fumes?

Answers: (1) Burns can be caused by heat, chemicals, or electricity. (2) The first thing to do after an accident is to help victims and call for emergency medical help if necessary. The second thing is to report the incident to your supervisor. (3) Lift with your legs to prevent back strain. (4) Wear gloves. (5) Ask your supervisor. (6) Machine guards and safety devices protect you from dangerous moving parts. (7) Use ventilation and/or wear a respirator.



SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Change the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors when you change the clocks to Daylight Savings Time. Though many office buildings and homes have electric smoke detectors installed (ones that are wired into the electrical grid of the home/building) almost every such smoke detector has a battery powered backup system that is designed to provide protection in case the power goes off. In order to work efficiently and provide maximum protection, detectors must be properly maintained and kept clean.



From the State of Delaware's Office of Highway Safety...

Look out for Motorcyclists

After a long winter of cold temperatures and more than our share of snow, it is nice to see one early sign of spring....warmer weather. As the weather warms, you can expect to see more people riding motorcycles. In Delaware, 70% of motorcycle injuries occur between May and September, but did you know that the fatalities are more likely in March and October? Particularly if the weather turns warm early, or the warm weather lasts into autumn.

The Delaware Office of Highway Safety is reminding motorists to share the road, and keep an eye out for motorcyclists because they are looking out for you. Here are some safety tips:

- A motorcyclist can be hidden in a vehicle's blind spot because of its smaller size. Always check your mirrors and blind spots twice for motorcyclists before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections.
- Always use your turn signal before changing lanes or merging with traffic. This allows motorcyclists to anticipate traffic flow and find a safe lane position.
- Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width and allow for more following distance between you and the motorcyclist.
- Do not share the lane, share the road.

For more information on motorcycle safety, please visit www.ohs.delaware.gov.

Drive Safe. Arrive Alive DE.