

**Loss Control Services: SAFETY TOPIC OF THE MONTH**

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**M.0805 Facilitator Outline: Safety in the Office**

Provide those in attendance with a copy of the pre-quiz (Handout #1) and give them a few minutes to answer the questions on it. Give each a copy of the "Safety in the Office" (Handout #2) – discuss the handout information interactively – then review completed pre-quiz with emphasis on how simple effort can create a safer workplace and prevent injuries. #s 11, 12 and 13 are intended to provoke discussion.

1. **False** When a ladder is not available, it is ok to use a chair as long as it is sturdy and does not have casters on it. (it is never ok to use a chair for a ladder)
2. Which of the following may create a safety hazard?
  - a. Leaving a file drawer open. b. Storing heavy objects on upper shelves. c. **Both may be hazards.**
3. What height of cabinet generally needs earthquake restraint?
  - a. 12 or more inches tall. b. **60 or more inches tall.** c. 30 or more inches wide. d. None of these.
4. **True** It is a good practice to have spilled liquids cleaned up immediately.
5. Which of these activities are acceptable to do while walking?
  - a. Reading notes. b. Write a text message c. **Be alert and watchful.** d. None of these.
6. **True** Life away from work may have a positive or negative effect on safety at work.
7. **True** Good body mechanics makes life at work easier and safer.
8. **True** Carrying materials while climbing stairs may be a safety hazard.
9. Which of the following should use a fire extinguisher to fight a fire?
  - a. Nearest person b. Administrators c. Custodians d. **Trained and authorized staff**
10. **Circle** the best response(s) in the statements below:
  - A. Safety hazards should be ...**reported** ... *ignored* ... **corrected** ... immediately.
  - B. Electrical extension cords should be ...**inspected for safe use** .... unplugged with wet hands .... **purchased and authorized by the employer** .....hidden under the carpet to keep things neat ... all of these are good practices.
11. **Agree** **Disagree** The questions on this quiz are very simple and easy to answer.
12. **Agree** **Disagree** It does not seem sensible that so many office accidents occur because these simple and easy safety practices are routinely ignored.
13. Do you have any comments to add to the discussion about your experience with the topic of Office Safety? – if so please make notes here: ***be open to discussion from the group***

Gary Metzler, MERMA Loss Control Manager may be contacted regarding this topic by email or phone:

**Email: gmetzler@merma.org Phone: (831) 783-3300 x13**

## Handout #2: Safety in the Office

Accidents do happen in the office. Few office workers realize that they are twice as likely to be injured in a fall as a non-office worker. Nationally, only automobile accidents outnumber falls as the leading cause of all accidents. In the office **slips, trips and falls** are the number one cause of disabling injuries. Thinking and working safely can prevent most accidents. You can become aware of the most common hazards in the office environment. The following are some examples of common hazards and what you can do to prevent them from causing an accident.



1. **Chair Care:** Don't lean back in your chair. Keep all legs on the floor so that you do not end up on the floor. Take time to reach out and hold on to the chair as you sit down. Be sure that the chair is beneath you as you sit. Chairs are not ladders! > **Use a proper ladder or step stool.** Office chairs should have ergonomic adjustments – be sure to use them and experiment to find what will work best for you to achieve a good working posture.

2. **Walkways:** Keep the floor and walkway clear of electrical, telephone and computer cables, boxes, etc. They are tripping hazards waiting to happen.



3. **Toppling File Cabinets:** Close one drawer in a filing cabinet before opening another. This prevents the file cabinet from tipping over on you.

4. **Watch Those Drawers:** Close the drawer in your desk before getting up and close file drawers before walking away from the file cabinet. This prevents the danger of people walking into an open file drawer or desk drawer.

5. **Think Bottom Heavy:** Store supplies inside cabinets, not on top of them. Store heavy items in lower drawers or on low shelves. Units of 60 inches or taller may need earthquake restraint.

6. **Do Not Slip Up:** Watch out for slippery surfaces. Spilled drinks or water from umbrellas are typical hazards and need to be cleaned up/or reported immediately.

7. **A Good View:** Look where you are going. Don't block your view by carrying loads higher than eye level. **Be alert** – look up, down and all around to spot a safety hazard.



8. **Multi-Tasking:** Don't read while walking. It doesn't save enough time to justify the risk. Driving is another activity that needs full concentration.

9. **What – Me Hurry?** Walk, do not run. Please slow down. Remember, life away from work is important too! Take time for yourself, use stress reduction techniques, good diet habits, exercise and regular visits to the doctor and dentist to help manage all the things in your busy life.

10. **Body Mechanics:** Ergonomics play an important part in a safe work environment and includes using good lifting techniques, bending and reaching properly, adjusting office equipment and using accessories – staplers, document holders, task lights, etc. – to make work easier.



11. **Hang On:** Hold onto handrails when using stairways.

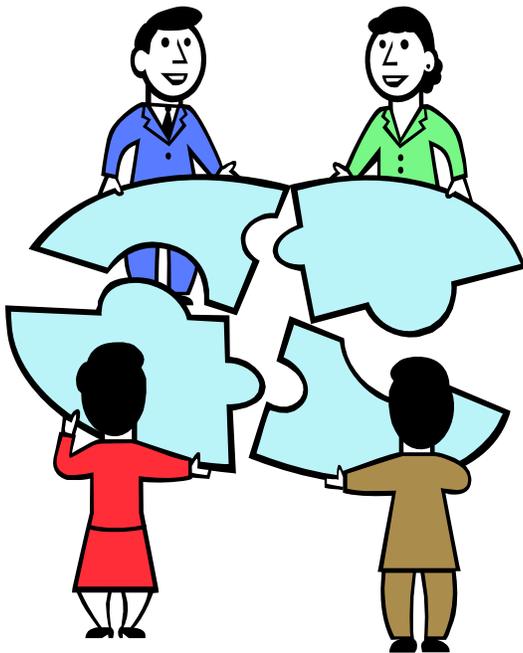
12. **Going Up?** Use elevators when carrying boxes if they are available. Stairs and carrying awkward objects is a recipe for an injury.



13 **Fire Away:** Observe all rules about fire safety including not using open flames, incense, potpourri, hotplates, space heaters and similar things that can create a fire hazard. **Do not use a fire extinguisher unless you are trained and authorized by your employer to do so!**

14 **ELO:** Don't overload wall sockets and extension cords. Use only approved cords and electrical equipment provided by the employer. Don't touch electrical switches, sockets, plugs, etc with wet hands.

15. **Do Your Part:** Watch for unsafe conditions such as defective equipment, burned out lights, loose steps, torn carpet, etc. and report them to your supervisor immediately.



**NOTES AND COMMENTS:**

## Handout # 1: *Pre-Quiz: Safety in the Office*

Take a few minutes to answer the following questions. We will review the pre-quiz at the close of the session. .

1. **True False** When a ladder is not available, it is ok to use a chair as long as it is sturdy and does not have casters on it.
2. Which of the following may create a safety hazard?
  - a. Leaving a file drawer open. **b.** Storing heavy objects on upper shelves. **c.** Both may be hazards.
3. What height of cabinet generally needs earthquake restraint?
  - a. 12 or more inches tall. **b.** 60 or more inches tall. **c.** 30 or more inches wide. **d.** None of these.
4. **True False** It is a good practice to have spilled liquids cleaned up immediately.
5. Which of these activities are acceptable to do while walking?
  - a. Reading notes. **b.** Write a text message **c.** Be alert and watchful. **d.** None of these.
6. **True False** Life away from work may have a positive or negative effect on safety at work.
7. **True False** Good body mechanics makes life at work easier and safer.
8. **True False** Carrying materials while climbing stairs may be a safety hazard.
9. Which of the following should use a fire extinguisher to fight a fire?
  - a. Nearest person. **b.** Administrators **c.** Custodians **d.** Trained and authorized staff
10. **Circle** the best response(s) in the statements below:
  - A. Safety hazards should be ... *reported* ... *ignored* ... *corrected* ... immediately.
  - B. Electrical extension cords should be ....*inspected for safe use* .... *unplugged with wet hands* .....*purchased and authorized by the employer* .....*hidden under the carpet to keep things neat* ..... *all of these are good practices.*
11. **Agree Disagree** The questions on this quiz are very simple and easy to answer.
12. **Agree Disagree** It does not seem sensible that so many office accidents occur because these simple and easy safety practices are routinely ignored.
13. Do you have any comments to add to the discussion about your experience with the topic of Office Safety? – if so please make notes here: