

The **MERMA Monthly**

July 2022

"Schools out, hazards are in!"

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CONTACT INFO

David Bolton
Loss Control Manager
(831) 296-9196 cell
dbolton@merma.org



HELPFUL LINKS

www.merma.org

www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/

[Schedule an Ergo
Evaluation](#)

eBackSafe® for Teachers & Paraeducators

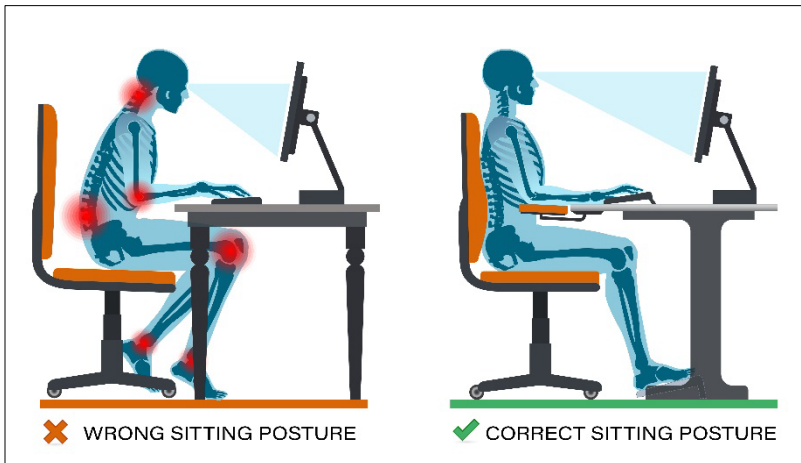
We are excited to announce that we have partnered with Future Industrial Technologies (FIT) to bring you the eBacksafe® virtual injury prevention program designed specifically for teachers and paraeducators. Segments of the virtual safety training were customized and filmed locally to ensure that real-life wellness scenarios were addressed.

FIT has been in business for 30 years helping school districts and other organizations throughout the US protect the health and wellbeing of employees. It was discovered that fatigue, discomfort, pain, and injuries are often caused by something called Cumulative Micro Trauma and that when employees learned how to prevent it, their quality of life at work and at home improved dramatically.

We are excited to be able to offer this customized injury prevention program to all teachers and paraeducators in your school district.

Contact me directly for details about enrolling your employees in this virtual training program.

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Workstation Ergonomics Safety Tips:

- Keep your feet supported on the floor or on a footrest when you work to reduce pressure on your lower back.
- Avoid twisting or bending your trunk or neck. Frequently used items should be positioned directly in front of you and angled upward on a copyholder when working.
- Keep your shoulders relaxed with your elbows close to your sides.
- Avoid resting your elbows on the hard surface or edge of your table. Pads can be used to protect your elbows if necessary.
- Elbows should be positioned at 100 to 110 degrees when working in order to keep a relaxed position at the keyboard. This could require a slight negative tilt (front of keyboard higher than back) when working in upright positions. If reclined in your chair, the keyboard could be at a positive angle to maintain this relaxed position.
- Your wrists should be in a neutral or straight position when keying or using a pointing device or calculator. Wrist rests can assist you in maintaining a neutral position when used properly during pauses. Float your arms above the keyboard and wrist rest when keying. Avoid planting your wrists on the table or wrist rest. This can result in bending the wrists either up and down or side to side.
- Take breaks. These breaks can be brief and should include stretches for optimal results. If possible, take a one or two-minute break every 15 to 20 minutes, or a five-minute break every hour. Every few hours, get up, move around, and do an alternative activity.

Wildfire Smoke Safety

In response to the growing number of wildfires in recent years, the Department of Industrial Relations' (DIR) Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board has adopted an emergency regulation to protect workers from hazards associated with wildfire smoke.

This new regulation will apply to any outdoor work environment where the current Air Quality Index (AQI) for particulate matter (PM) 2.5 is 151 or greater, and exposure is greater than one hour.

The outdoor air quality is posted at the U.S. EPA website www.airnow.gov.

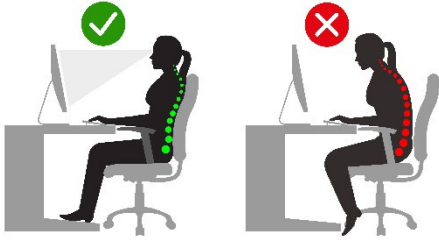


The following may be used as guidelines for managing employees who work outdoors when the air quality is PM2.5 151 or greater.

- Offer voluntary use of N95 dust masks with training on how to properly wear
- Offer training on the hazards of wildfire smoke and how to protect yourself
- Work indoors when possible
- Reduce physical intensity of work
- Utilize vehicle A/C to help filter air
- Employees with existing medical conditions sensitive to bad air should consult with their doctor regarding an action plan for unhealthy air days

Any signs or symptoms caused by unhealthy air (i.e. coughing or difficulty breathing) should be reported to your supervisor immediately

Schedule an ergonomic assessment for new employees!



When hiring new employees, it's important to help set them up for success. This is especially true in regards to their workstation and ergonomic set-up. M.E.R.M.A. offers free ergonomic assessments for your new employees, or for employees who have recently changed workstations.

To schedule a workstation evaluation, email David Bolton at dbolton@merma.org.

July

July	National Fireworks Safety Month	Consumer Product Safety Commission	https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/Fireworks
July	Vehicle Theft Prevention Month	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration	nhtsa.gov
