

SAFETY HOUSEKEEPING AND ACCIDENT PREVENTION IN OFFICE ENVIRONMENTS

COURSE OUTLINE

- **There are several keys to preventing accidents. They include...**
 - Maintaining a good “safety attitude”.
 - Developing good “safety habits”.
 - Learning how to use sound judgement.
 - Knowing your body’s limitations just like you know its abilities.
- **It takes real thought and practice to learn how to avoid mental and physical stress when you’re on the job. You have to be able to...**
 - Pace yourself.
 - Recognize when you need to take a break.
 - Never bite off more than you can chew.
- **When things become routine, we sometimes forget hazards that are lurking around the next corner. To stay sharp and avoid accidents...**
 - Never let your body run on “auto-pilot” with your mind somewhere else.
 - Don’t let pressure on the job make you reckless.
- **If you are using sound judgment in your office work area you should...**
 - Pay attention to warning systems like smoke detectors and emergency lights.
 - Never overload electrical outlets or surge protectors.
- **Clutter and large and small hazards are major causes of accidents at work. To avoid potential “tripping” problems...**
 - Dispose of excess material and rubbish as quickly as possible.
 - Keep walkways, halls, aisles and stairways free of debris and equipment. (don’t store furniture or supplies there either).
- **Keep doorways clear, especially emergency exits.**
 - Mark slippery areas with hazard signs so people will know to tread carefully.
- **You should also...**

- Clearly outline walkways so that everyone knows where the safe paths are.
- Correct small hazards such as a screw jutting out from a door sill, a pencil lying on the floor or a loose piece of carpet.
- Make sure electrical cords are taped down.
- Keep drawers closed to prevent painful “trips” to the floor.
- Report bad lighting immediately.
- **Using tools and equipment properly and safely is an important part of accident prevention. Always make sure that...**
 - Tools are clean and in good shape.
 - Knives and other cutting edges are kept sharp (when a blade is dull, the extra force needed to make a cut could cause you to lose control).
 - You are using the correct tool for the job.
 - You use a step stool or ladder to get you “up high”, not a chair.
- **To avoid back injuries when carrying equipment and supplies, get a good grip and take your time.**
- **If an object is too heavy or bulky to lift alone...**
 - Use a hand truck.
 - ...or ask for help.
- **A major part of safety housekeeping and accident prevention involves substances that you work around every day.**
 - You might be surprised how many at your workplace are hazardous.
- **Before you start to work...**
 - Read labels on soaps, cleaners and disinfectants and follow their instructions.
 - Check printer and copy machine toner boxes for mentions of chemicals.
 - Read Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) as well.
 - Wear personal protective equipment such as goggles, gloves or respirators. (check the SDS or talk to your supervisor to find out what PPE you should be using).
- **When storing chemicals...**
 - Read the SDS and the labels to determine the environment they need.
 - Pay attention to temperature and ventilation requirements.
- **You should also...**

- Never overstock shelves (too many containers make it difficult to find what you want and can increase the chance of a spill).

*** * * SUMMARY * * ***

- **Your workplace can contain both obvious and hidden hazards, which can decrease productivity and result in painful injuries, even death.**
- **To prevent accidents, you need to maintain a good “safety attitude”, develop good “safety habits” and know your body’s limitations and abilities.**
- **Keeping your workplace neat and clean every day, marking slippery areas with hazard signs and keeping drawers closed, can reduce tripping and slipping accidents.**
- **Another important part of accident prevention is using tools and equipment properly and safely and using the correct tool for the job.**
- **You can help to create a safer workplace if you know the hazards and follow the rules for creating a risk-free environment every day!**