

Personal Protective Equipment (Practices)

Safety Training Handout for Administrative Office Positions

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is essential to a safe work environment; and it's not just paper cuts we are talking about here but a myriad of office hazards that can be prevented with PPE! Although the need for personal protective equipment in the office workplace is minimal, it is important to remember to protect yourself.

If you are performing a task which exposes a part of your body to an injury or contamination from chemicals or body fluids, use a barrier to protect whichever part of your body is at risk: hands=gloves, eyes=goggles, airway=mask. If PPE is not available for a task, please contact your supervisor.

Falls:

- The use of hand rails when ascending and descending stairs helps ensure stability and the prevention of falls.
- Always use a ladder or step stool to retrieve anything above shoulder level & never use substitutes such as chairs or boxes
- Do not lean too far back in chairs. This may result in over-balancing and a fall.
- Be sure the pathway is clear before you walk.
- Secure electrical cords and wires away from walkways.
- Avoid excessive bending, twisting, and leaning backward while seated.

Filing Cabinets/Bookcases:

- Fill the second drawer from the bottom in a four-drawer filing cabinet before any of the others, to weight the bottom and to prevent it from tilting over.
- Return drawers and doors to the closed position after use to prevent bumping and tripping. Never open more than one drawer or door at a time.
- Place file cabinets where their use will not interfere with traffic patterns.

Some More Safe Practices:

- Proper shoes ensure stability when caring or moving boxes or other large objects. Guard the sharp edges of furniture to prevent personal injury. Keep desk "pull-out" writing surfaces closed when not in use.
- Proper lifting is essential and the use of handcarts when moving heavy or large objects such as file cabinets and boxes.
- Practice good housekeeping skills. Floors should be free of obstacles and garbage cans should be kept out of the way and emptied frequently.
- Clean up spills immediately to prevent slipping accidents.
- Report all defects such as loose tiles, broken steps, railing and doors immediately.
- Always keep long hair out of risk area when working with machines or item that it can get caught in
- Office equipment such as typewriters, index files, lights or calculators should not be placed on the edges of a desk, filing cabinet, or table.
- Keep razor blades, tacks and other sharp objects in closed containers.
- Use the proper tool for the job at hand.
- Do not cover air vents or obstruct airflow from registers. Do not place furniture, equipment, or materials in locations that will interfere with air movement around thermostats.