



Safety, Safety & More Safety

Safety Training Schedule 2010

January:	Fire Extinguisher Safety
February:	Hand & Power Tool Safety
March:	Electrical Safety Awareness
April:	Back Stress Prevention/Safe Lifting
May:	Substance Abuse/Safe Driving
June:	Confined Space Entry
July:	Hazard Communication PPE/MSDS
August:	Lockout/Tagout Try
Sept:	Fall Protection/Ladder/Scaffold Safety
October:	Violence in the Workplace Emergency
November:	Hearing Conservation
December:	Blood Bourne Pathogens

Stimulants

Stimulants—such as energy or caffeinated drinks and supplements or prescription and recreational drugs—can affect workplace safety.

Caffeine is the most common stimulant. In moderation, it can increase energy, but it affects people differently. If you overuse, caffeine, you can feel nervous and irritable, anxious, and get an abnormal heart rhythm (arrhythmia). You may have difficulty concentrating and sleeping, leading to mistakes on the job. You may miss your body's signals that it is tired and you should slow down, leading to strains, sprains and injuries. Because caffeine is a diuretic, it can cause frequent urination, dehydration, and heat illness, if you're exposed to hot work environments or heavy exercise. You should know you caffeine tolerance.

Energy drinks are another popular source of caffeine.

Overuse of caffeine content energy drinks can lead to dehydration, nausea, vomiting and heart irregularities. Never mix an energy drink with alcohol; the combination can mask the effects of alcohol, causing you to over-indulge. Energy drinks may contain other additives like amino acids, carbohydrates (sugars), vitamins, and herbs that can have their own side effects. Read product labels to get the ingredients, potential side effects, and directions on amounts you can drink in a day.

Energy supplements available in pill or tablet form that contain caffeine, sugar, herbs and vitamins claim to boost strength, alertness, energy and/or weight loss but they too can have mild to serious side effects. Read supplement labels for ingredients, use and dose directions.

Some prescription medica-

tions and recreational (illegal) drugs like cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamines can cause users to feel a temporary surge of energy, activity and alertness. Don't take recreational drugs (or consume alcohol) before or during work hours. Overuse of any drug stimulant can lead to addiction and severe physical and mental symptoms. Because drugs alter your reaction time, ability to reason, and alertness, they can lead to serious mistakes and accidents.

Control the amounts of stimulant drinks and supplements you use. If you use prescription drugs, follow the directions and dose information. Don't drive or operate machinery if you are feeling the effects of stimulant overuse. Know the signs and symptoms of overuse in yourself and in your co-workers.

Safety Resource Links

State Compensation Insurance Fund:
www.scif.com

OSHA: www.osha.gov

Home Safety Council: www.homesafetycouncil.net

BSI Temporary Services

5071 Business Center Drive, Suite 2

Fairfield, CA 94534

(877) 246-2202

Fax: (877) 575-4943

www.bsitemporaryservices.com



Prevent Injury from Backpacks, Purses, Laptops & Wallets

People are used to hearing about ergonomics at work, but rarely think about the everyday items used to carry “stuff” that may contribute to physical discomfort and injury. The information below focuses on the ergonomics of what we use to carry our smart phones, computers, and other personal items.

Backpacks are used by people of all ages; unfortunately, they are often overloaded and packed incorrectly. This has contributed to an increase in reported back, shoulder and neck pain.

- Wear both straps over both shoulders with the backpack over the mid-back muscles.
- Avoid the shoulder straps being too loose or too tight.
- Keep the weight of the backpack within 10-15% of the user's body-weight. Carry only what is needed and organize the contents by plac-

ing the heavier items closest to the back.

Purses have grown in size and weight and, as they saying goes, “the bigger the purse, the more stuff will fill it”. Single traps purses cause uneven loading of the back muscles and restrict blood flow at the shoulder.

- Keep purses as light as possible by carrying only what is essential.
- Avoid thin straps, long straps, and chain handles.
- Regularly switch shoulders when carrying.

Laptop bags are typically single-strap



models, carried over one shoulder. The weight of the laptop and other bag contents can place considerable strain on the shoulder muscles, restrict blood flow, and pinch nerves.

- Consider using a bag with wheels or a two strap backpack.
- Alternate carrying the bag by switching sides and holding it down close.
- Avoid using a sling-style messenger bag.

Wallets may be smaller, but they can contribute to extreme pain in the low back. Sitting on a wallet in the back pocket can cause damage to key nerves in the back. Always remove the wallet from the back pocket when sitting and/or driving. Consider a thinner, smaller style wallet and carry only what is necessary.

Cruising For A Bruising?

Controlling the speed of your car with your fingertips on cruise control lets you take your foot off the accelerator and rest. It can be a good way to prevent driver fatigue, speeding and help with fuel economy during long trips on flat, straight roads and highways. However, the cruise control feature can cause accidents if you use it improperly or in hazardous road conditions such as city streets, heavy traffic, hills, winding roads, and wet, slippery roads.

Set the cruise control speed at a legal, safe speed for the road and the current driving conditions. Using cruise control in traffic and on city streets with lights and stop signs can be tedious, frustrating and unsafe. In these situations, you need to reset your cruise control each time you brake and it is unlikely you

would be driving at the minimum speeds needed for cruise control.

Cruise control on hills and winding roads can be hazardous. On hills, it is best to manually control your speed using the accelerator and brake. Cruise control may not accelerate your vehicle properly up a hill, making you a slow-moving hazard. A Steep downhill grade can cause your vehicle to speed up faster than the cruise control setting and safe road speeds. Watch your speedometer and manually accelerator and brake as needed. On twisting and winding roads, brake and accelerate into and out of the turns. With cruise control on, your could approach a turn at an unsafe speed and lose control.

Don't use your cruise control when the road is wet and slippery due to heavy

rain, hail, snow, ice or other conditions. If your wheels begin to skid and you don't step on the brake to stop, the continued acceleration can cause you to overdrive the road conditions and lose wheel traction and control of the vehicle. If you do step on the brake to stop, slow or even turn off the cruise control, the change in tire speed can also cause the wheels to slip, lose traction and skid out of control. If there heavy rainfall, water puddles, and a slippery road surface, hydroplaning and serious accidents can occur.

Fatigue and a false sense of security can lead to a lack of attention and an accident. Keep your brain engaged in your driving; scan the road ahead for traffic, obstacles, and changing road conditions.

Electric Tools—Grounds for Concern

Each year workers suffer shock when handling electrical tools and equipment. To protect workers against hazards of electricity, teach them the basic facts about the causes of shock and death. One of the big problems in understanding the dangers of electrical shock is the mistaken belief that only high voltages kill. It's not the voltage that kills, but the amount of current that passes through the body. The condition and placement of the body has a lot to do with the chance of getting a shock.

Water and electricity can be a fatal combination. Damp areas and metal objects can offer good shortcuts for electricity to reach the ground. If a worker's hands are sweaty, if socks and shoes are moist or damp, if the floor is wet, or if the worker is standing in a puddle of water, the moisture will allow more current to pass through the body. If work is to be done with metal objects or in damp areas, workers should recognize the hazards and take necessary precautions. These precautions include rubber gloves and boots, rubber mats, insulated tools, and rubber sheets

which can be used to cover exposed metal.

Remembering a few tips can help avoid electrical accidents:

- Treat every electric wire as if it were a live one.
- Inspect equipment and extension cords before each use.
- Take faulty equipment or plugs with bent or missing prongs out of service for repair.
- Only qualified electricians should repair electrical equipment or work on energized lines.
- If a plug doesn't have three prongs or if the receptacle doesn't have three prong openings, make sure the tool is grounded in some other way before use.
- Never try to bypass an electrical system by cutting off the third prong of a plug.



- Turn off the power and report the smell of hot or burning plastic, smoke, sparks or flickering light.
- Stop using a tool or appliance if a slight shock or tingling is felt.
- Never disconnect an electrical plug by pulling the cord.
- Whenever working on an electric circuit, the circuit should be turned off and locked out at the circuit breaker or fuse box to ensure that the circuit cannot be accidentally turned on.
 - Those who regularly work on or around energized electrical equipment should be trained in emergency response and CPR.

In wet, winter months, extra caution should be observed when working with electrical equipment or when working near grounded objects.

Preventing Strains and Sprains

Lifting, pushing and overreaching are common causes of strains and sprains. Any job that requires you to sit or stand bent in an awkward position for long periods of time can cause excess stress and strain on muscles. Most strains and sprains affect the back, arms, and shoulders. However, there are some simple things that you can do to prevent or minimize body strains and sprains.

Many strains and sprains occur because of poor material handling. Workers lift things that weight too much or they lift incorrectly. Lift correctly by bending your knees, not your back. Carry loads close to your body. Injuries occur when workers try to pull or lift a

heavy or awkward object without help or lift an object while twisting from the waist level.

Get help with heavy loads. Don't try to move or lift an object you can't handle. Instead of lifting a 75-pound load, break it down into smaller parts. If you can't break it down, get help from a mechanical device or lift it with another worker. Make sure moving equipment works properly or it will cause you to strain unnecessarily just trying to get it to work. If the wheels on a cart are not aligned, you could strain your arms, shoulders, and back trying to move it.

Change your working positions fre-

quently. Chronic strain due to an unchanging work position can weaken your back, arms and shoulders. Adjust working heights to prevent slumping or excessive reaching. A vicious cycle develops when chronic strain continues, muscles become less able to withstand strenuous activity and grow more prone to injury of all kinds. Stretch during the day to increase your flexibility. Take body relaxation breaks by letting your shoulders and neck muscles go limp; swivel your head or arms or flex your hands and fingers.

Take care of your whole body with exercise, proper posture a sensible diet and adequate rest.

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5071 Business Center Drive
Suite 2
Fairfield, CA 94534

(877) 246-2202
Fax: (877) 575-4943
hr@bsitemporaryservices.com

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www.bsitemporaryservices.com



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Practice Good Housekeeping

A planned and enforced housekeeping program is an important part of any safety program that can produce immediate and long-range positive results. A clean and orderly workplace can prevent slips, trips, or falls and reduce the chance of caught and struck by injuries. Practicing good housekeeping can also lower operating costs and increase worker production.

When a work area is clean and orderly, workers can do their jobs more efficiently, without unnecessary delays. And, production runs smoothly when workers can quickly find and locate tools, parts and materials. Keeping



floor space clear and unobstructed allows workers freedom of movement, smoother and faster traffic flow, and easy access to machinery and equipment.

Another benefit to good housekeeping is the reduction of fire hazards. Poor

housekeeping can cause fires, help spread them, impede the effort to put them out or prevent the safe exit from a fire. Good Housekeeping also contributes to higher employee morale. A clean and orderly workplace lessens frustration, increases comfort, makes work more enjoyable, and improves employee attitudes. But, for a good housekeeping program to be effective, management must be committed to the program, communicate their commitment to workers, and consistently enforce the programs practices.