

SAFETY MEETING TOPIC: Office Safety

We think of an office to be a pretty safe place to work. After all, who could get hurt sitting at a desk?

Unfortunately, it is not true. Every year thousands of workers are injured in office accidents and some of the injuries are very serious. The most serious accidents occur from falls on stairways and on the same level, or from lifting improperly. However, a number of other office hazards take their toll each year. Some of the other major causes of office injuries have been:

- Sharp pointed pencils, staples and other pins that cause cuts or puncture wounds. The injuries are often not serious, but sometimes become very serious when infection sets in.
- Rotating duplicators, elevator doors, file cabinets, and even desk drawers cause a lot of "pinch point" injuries every year so watch where you put your fingers.
- Unsecured file cabinets and other heavy objects fall over striking employees. Always be alert to hazards above your head and never open more than one drawer at a time in a file cabinet.
- Be especially careful of pencils, water, pens, paper clips and other objects on the floor that can cause slipping hazards. Take a moment to pick the object up so that on one else will fall.
- Some kinds of paper have sharp edges and can cause very small, but often painful cuts. Don't run your fingers along the edge of paper.
- Watch out for electrical shock hazards. Electric appliances, the typewriter, pencil sharpeners, fans, etc., should be electrically grounded or double insulated to prevent shock. If switches, the plug, cord or wall receptacles are damaged or badly worn, they should be repaired or replaced.
- Horseplay, "fooling around" still causes many injuries in offices. Remember that practical jokes don't really belong in the office.

In short, there are hazards in offices, so keep it in mind and guard against them.

Provided by: Hellman & Associates, Inc., www.ehscompliance.com, 303-384-9828

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