



# YCPARMIA Safety Journal

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## Neat, Clean, and Safe

### Rate your role in workplace housekeeping

Workplace housekeeping isn't just about neatness. It's also about:

**Efficiency.** A well-organized workplace is a more productive one.

**Safety.** A well-maintained workplace is a safer one with fewer hazards and fewer accidents.

**Hygiene.** A clean and sanitary workplace is a healthier place in which you're less likely to pick up germs, come into contact with chemicals on work surfaces, or inhale irritating or harmful dust.

To find out how much you're contributing to all these important goals, rate yourself by circling **1** for "Never," **2** for "Sometimes," **3** for "Usually," or **4** for "Always" for each statement below, and then check your score.

#### Do you:

- |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| → Keep your work area clean and neat on a daily basis?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Regularly inspect your work area for hazards?          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Pick up objects from the floor and clean up spills?    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Report hazards you can't remove or fix?                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Dispose of trash and scrap properly to prevent fires?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Keep walkways and stairs clear of tripping hazards?    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Clean up after yourself when you finish a job?         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Store tools and materials in their assigned place?     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Make sure tools and materials are properly maintained? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| → Use cleaning products safely?                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**TOTAL SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Check your score:

**If your total score was 40,** congratulations! You're taking responsibility for workplace housekeeping. Thanks for helping to make the workplace safer.

**If you scored less than 40 but more than 30,** you're contributing, but not as much as you could. Make housekeeping a higher priority.

**If you scored less than 30,** you're letting other people do your housekeeping chores for you or chores are not getting done. That's bad because it increases the risk that you or a co-worker could be injured by housekeeping-related hazards. Don't take chances with safety. Pitch in, do your share, and help keep the workplace safe for everybody.

#### CARELESS HOUSEKEEPING = MORE ACCIDENTS + INJURIES

With the many other safety issues to deal with at work, housekeeping can sometimes get "swept under the rug." But that's a big mistake, as these two workers learned:

- *Ken was delivering materials to another work area. He left his pallet jack in the middle of an aisle, right before a corner. Mike came around the corner not expecting to find an obstacle in his way. He tripped over the pallet jack and sprained his wrist as he tried to break his fall. Ken was one of the first ones on the scene of the accident. "Gee, sorry, pal," he said to Mike. Mike, shaken up and in pain, snapped back, "Don't be sorry, pal. Just be careful. Next time, leave your pallet jack where somebody can't trip over it!"*
- *Lucy figured she did enough housework at home. She wasn't about to do more at work. So she didn't bother to wipe her work surface after working with the strong solvent she frequently used. Eventually she developed a red, itchy rash. It turned out to be dermatitis that developed because of skin contact with the solvent. Although she always wore gloves when working with the solvent, she took them off when she was done. But solvent she'd spilled remained on the work surface and got on her unprotected skin.*

In both cases, safety and health problems could have been avoided if the simple rules of good housekeeping had been followed.

# Spring Cleaning

## Perform housekeeping chores safely

Many industrial-strength cleaning products used in the workplace contain hazardous ingredients. For example, they may contain acids such as phosphoric acid or hydrochloric acid. Or they may contain bases (also called alkalines) such as sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, or ammonia. Bleaches may contain strong bases and/or sodium or calcium hypochlorite, another hazardous chemical.

The hazardous ingredients in cleaning products could be:

- **Corrosive.** Corrosives can burn your skin or eyes, sometimes destroying tissue or even causing blindness.
- **Toxic.** Overexposure to toxics is, in the worst cases, deadly. Even toxics that aren't fatal can make you sick or damage the functions of internal organs such as the kidneys or liver.
- **Irritants.** Irritations can range from rashes, dermatitis, and itchy eyes to sore throats.
- **Reactive.** Some substances can, if combined with other substances, burn, explode, or release dangerous vapors. Never mix cleaning products without special instructions to do so.

Protect yourself when using these products by reading labels and taking proper precautions, including using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and adequate ventilation. And always wash your hands when you're done.

# Good Food on the Go

## Don't sacrifice nutrition for convenience

If you're on the go from morning till night, you know eating well isn't easy. Here are some nutrition tips from Gale Begeman, a nutrition counselor at the University of Arizona. The tips are designed to help students eat right, but work just as well for anyone on the go:

- **Put something in your stomach within an hour of waking.** You may not have time or the appetite for a big breakfast, but at least eat something healthful to fuel the start of your day.
- **Snack sensibly during the workday.** Fruit, pretzels, yogurt, and other low-fat, low-sugar snacks will give you energy and provide good nutrition without all the extra calories.
- **Eat nutritious meals.** If you eat out or buy takeout, take it easy on the fried food. Instead, opt for lean meat, grilled chicken, or broiled fish with vegetables and rice, potato, pasta, or a nice big green salad.
- **Eat when hungry and stop when full.** Avoid "mindless" eating right out of the bag or carton. Take a decent serving and go back for seconds only if you're really still hungry.
- **Drink plenty of fluids all day.** Avoid sugary drinks or too much caffeine. Opt instead for water, juice, or milk.

This month is **National Nutrition Month**. So think and eat healthy!

## FIRE EXTINGUISHERS PULL, AIM, SQUEEZE, AND SWEEP!

As a general rule, fighting workplace fires is best left to professionals who are trained in firefighting. If a major fire ever happens in your work area, the best thing to do is make sure that emergency response personnel are notified and evacuate the building.

But since portable fire extinguishers can be used effectively to keep small fires from spreading, it's a good idea to know how to use fire extinguishers effectively.

- ➔ **Hold the extinguisher upright** and stand 6 to 8 feet from the fire.
- ➔ **Make sure you have an escape route** open behind you in case you can't extinguish the fire and you need to evacuate.
- ➔ **Pull the pin** on the extinguisher. Some extinguishers require you to press a lever.
- ➔ **Aim at the base of the fire.** You'll only get one chance, since extinguishers last for only a few seconds.
- ➔ **Avoid blowing around burning material**, such as paper or cardboard.
- ➔ **Squeeze the handle** to release the extinguishing agent.
- ➔ **Sweep back and forth** until the fire goes out.

Also, choose the right extinguisher:

- ➔ **Class A** extinguishers are for paper, wood, trash, and cloth fires.
- ➔ **Class B** extinguishers are for grease, gas, or flammable liquid fires.
- ➔ **Class C** extinguishers are for electrical fires.
- ➔ **Multipurpose ABC** extinguishers can be used for all three types of fires.



# Danger! Poison!

## Prevent poisoning at work and at home

Are you playing Russian roulette with poisons? Have you ever used a chemical product without reading the hazard information on the label? Have you ever stumbled into the bathroom in the middle of the night with a headache or indigestion and grabbed some pills from the medicine cabinet without turning on the light to check that you have the right pills?

Most of us have done something like this or worse at one time or another. In fact, according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, millions of Americans are exposed every year to potentially poisonous substances at work and at home. Over 500,000 of those people end up in the hospital emergency room annually, often as a result of carelessness.

**March is Poison Prevention Awareness Month**, so this is the perfect time to refresh your training on how to prevent poisoning at work and at home.

- ⌘ Read and follow label and MSDS warnings and precautions.
- ⌘ Wear appropriate PPE when using toxic chemicals, and wash carefully when you're finished with the job.
- ⌘ Keep chemicals and medications in your home out of the reach of children.
- ⌘ Keep medicines in their original labeled container, and throw away expired medications.

# Know How to Be Safe?

## Seven questions about workplace safety

Check your safety smarts with this quick quiz.

1. Burn injuries can be caused by three different hazards. What are they?
2. What's the first thing you should do if you witness a workplace accident? What's the second thing?
3. When you lift a heavy object, which set of muscles should you use, your back muscles or your leg muscles?
4. How can you protect your hands from cuts, scrapes, or chemical contamination?
5. What should you do if you don't know whether a situation is hazardous?
6. What are two features of a machine that prevent your hands from getting into the point of operation while the machine is operating?
7. What are two steps you can take to keep from breathing hazardous vapors or fumes?

**Answers:** (1) Burns can be caused by heat, chemicals, or electricity. (2) The first thing to do after an accident is to help victims and call for emergency medical help if necessary. The second thing is to report the incident to your supervisor. (3) Lift with your legs to prevent back strain. (4) Wear gloves. (5) Ask your supervisor. (6) Machine guards and safety devices protect you from dangerous moving parts. (7) Use ventilation and/or wear a respirator.



### TRAIN LIKE A PRO

Let's say your boss comes up to you tomorrow and asks you to help train a new employee to perform a particular task safely. Follow these tips to ensure success:

- **Set a training objective.** All training has to have an objective. Maybe you're going to teach the new employee how to inspect PPE or how to use a piece of equipment. Explain the purpose of the training and what the trainee is expected to learn.
- **Demonstrate the task.** Show the trainee how to perform the task step by step. Ask questions to make sure the trainee understands each step. Then let the trainee practice the task. Hands-on experience is usually the best way to learn.
- **Reinforce good performance and correct poor performance.** Watch the new employee perform the task and give positive feedback for correct, safe performance. Correct mistakes and unsafe performance immediately. But be positive and helpful rather than critical. Say, for example, "You could run into a problem doing it that way. Let me show you again."
- **Monitor performance.** The last point is to keep an eye on your trainee for a while after training until you're sure that he or she has really learned the lesson and is doing the job safely and correctly.

# Travel Safety

## BEFORE YOU GO

- Check to see if the area you want to visit is tourist friendly. If not, do not visit there. Travel advisory information is posted regularly in major newspapers.
- Get references from family and friends about the areas you plan to visit.
- Make reservations with a reputable travel agent.
- Let someone you trust know your travel plans, and if your plans change, inform them.
- Obtain travel insurance.

## WHEN TRAVELLING BY CAR

- Have your vehicle tuned up, including checking the tire conditions.
- Maintain proper fluid levels, including the gas level. Keep the tank full.
- Know where you're going.
- Obtain current maps. Don't leave the maps on display for everyone to see.
- Use well travelled roads.
- Keep doors locked and windows rolled up.
- Don't look like a tourist.
- Don't stop for strangers or someone with car trouble. Call the police for them.
- Don't leave valuables inside the car; place them out of sight or in the trunk.
- If you need to stop, use well-lit, populated service stations or stores.
- Accompany your children to the restrooms.
- Be aware of your surroundings.

## IF YOU HAVE CAR TROUBLE

- Stay with the car until help arrives.
- Keep the doors locked and the windows closed.
- Keep the hood down. If it is raised up, it obstructs your view of oncoming people or traffic
- If your vehicle develops a flat tire in an unsafe area, remember you can drive slowly on it to safety.
- Place a "Call Police" sign in the window.
- If a stranger offers to help, do not get out of the car. Ask them to call the police for you or advise them that the police are on their way.
- Buy or rent a cellular telephone and know what the emergency numbers are for the area you're travelling.
- Remember 9-1-1 on a cellular telephone does not give police your location. Know where you are so that emergency services can locate you.

## HOTEL SAFETY

- Check in and out discretely. If the hotel desk clerk announces your room number, request another room.
- Verify key procedures.
- Keep baggage in view.
- Have the porter check the room first, to ensure it's empty and secure.
- Keep doors and windows locked, including the balcony door.
- Don't allow hotel staff, service people, or any other visitors into your room without confirming who they are with the front desk.
- Don't leave keys lying around. Report lost keys immediately and consider changing rooms.
- Don't leave your door unlocked even if you're just going down the hall. Someone could help themselves to your belongings within a very short period of time, or be in the room when you return.
- Place the "Do not disturb" sign on the door, when going out. It creates the illusion that someone is there.

## OTHER TRAVEL SAFETY TIPS

- Leave valuables at home.
- Don't advertise your travel plans, especially to people you don't know well. Pay attention to those eavesdropping on your conversation.
- Use your business address instead of your home address and phone number on your luggage.
- Don't use fancy business cards on your luggage. Use a plain label instead.
- Never leave your keys in your coat pocket, and don't put your address on the key ring.
- Use a money belt instead of carrying a purse. If you must carry a purse don't leave any valuables in it.
- Always carry local currency when you are travelling, or widely accepted foreign currency. i.e.. U.S. dollars.
- Use a reliable taxi service and don't take an "alternative" route.
- Know the local emergency numbers, or carry them with you. Carry enough local coins for a pay phone, or a cell phone with service in the country you are visiting.
- Look for hotels with 24 hour security personnel.
- Use the hotel safe for valuables.
- If you travel with sensitive electronic material, put it on a disk in an encrypted format, and carry the disk with you. Do not leave any important information on your laptop hard drive