



## Wash Away Illness

The second week of December is **National Handwashing Awareness Week**. According to the CDC, frequent and careful hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent infection—and to keep you healthy. Believe it or not, there's a right way to wash your hands effectively:

1. Wet hands with clean running water (warm water if available) and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together to make lather and scrub all surfaces. Pay particular attention to fingers, fingertips, and under fingernails where germs love to breed. Palms are heavy germ zones, too.
3. Continue rubbing hands for 15-20 seconds—about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.
4. Rinse hands well under running water.
5. Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If drying hands with a paper towel, use it to turn off the faucet.

If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands. Alcohol-based rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting. Apply the product to the palm of one hand, then rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

## Keep The Holidays Happy

**Prioritize:** Decide which events to attend and which traditions to keep. You don't have to do it all!

**Plan:** If you're hosting, make a menu and prepare food ahead of time. If you're traveling, book early to avoid the busiest travel times. If you're shopping, make lists and shop early.

**Delegate:** Ask family members to help with baking, cleaning, cooking, decorating, shopping, and wrapping.

**Let go of the need for perfection:** You can still have fun even if everything isn't perfect.

**Take care of yourself:** Continue to eat nutritiously, exercise, and get enough sleep overall—even as you allow indulgences for party treats, rich foods, and holiday schedules.

## Decor Dos & Don'ts

The best places for holiday decorations are in lobbies, reception areas, and break rooms.

### Do Use

- Artificial trees and greenery made of non-combustible or fire retardant materials or treated with flame retardant.
- Non-breakable decorations.
- UL-approved holiday lights and extension cords.

### Avoid

- Decorations made of flammable or combustible materials
- Electric lights on metallic trees
- Decorations that block emergency equipment, signs, and exits
- Lighted candles
- Stapling of light cords to the wall
- Cords in aisles, dangling over partitions or anywhere they could be tripped over
- Leaving lights on overnight and weekends





## It's No Accident

Know your role in incident / accident investigations:

- \* **Report all accidents and near misses right away.** Even if nobody was hurt, your supervisor needs to know what happened so steps can be taken to prevent future problems.
- \* **If you witness an accident, write down what happened.** Do so as soon after the accident as possible—what, where, when, who, and why.
- \* **Don't disturb the scene of the accident.** You could destroy valuable evidence that could help investigators figure out how the accident happened.
- \* **Provide any information you have about an accident.** Come forward right away and tell what you know. Your information is essential to the success of the investigation.
- \* **Lend your expertise to the investigation.** If you have special knowledge about the equipment or procedures involved or the circumstances surrounding the accident, tell what you know and offer your suggestions.
- \* **Encourage co-workers to cooperate** in accident investigations. Remind them that the purpose of an accident investigation is to prevent future accidents— accidents that could involve any one of them.
- \* **Join with co-workers to implement any corrective measures** that come out of an investigation. Follow new safety rules that result from an investigation.

## Analyze This!

No one knows your job better than you. Performing your own Job Hazard Analysis will help you see if there are ways to do it more safely:

1. **Break down the job.** List each task involved in the job in order of occurrence.
2. **Identify the hazards.** Examine each task to identify existing or potential hazards. For example, while performing a particular activity, could you get a hand or an arm caught in moving machine parts, be struck by an object, fall from a height, or be exposed to environmental hazards such as chemical vapors, excessive noise, or extreme heat?
3. **Evaluate the hazards.** How serious is the risk? How serious are the consequences of an accident? Are there safety measures already in place sufficient to deal with these hazards? Are there other safety procedures or protective equipment that could minimize the risk?
4. **Look for ways to reduce or eliminate the hazards.** Suggestions include doing the job differently, reorganizing the area to minimize awkward positions, substituting less hazardous materials, changing from manual to mechanical techniques, or changing tools or equipment.
5. **Revisit and revise your JHAs.** If your job changes due to new procedures or different equipment and materials, revisit your JHA even if there are no evident problems. Revise your JHA if you have an accident, injury, near-miss, or when you see an obvious problem.