

GENERAL SAFETY RULES

TEHAMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Tehama County Department of Education has established the following safety and health rules, which are applicable to all staff members. Adherence to these rules is mandatory.

1. Report all accidents and/or injuries to your supervisor **immediately** after the incident.
2. Report any unsafe condition or potentially unsafe condition to your supervisor.
3.
 - A. Avoid horseplay or any action that may endanger other people.
 - B. Always walk, never run, when performing your work.
 - C. Don't clean up any "Potentially Hazardous Material" spill without first talking to your supervisor.
4. Personal Protective Equipment: Wear it at all times where required by **Cal-OSHA, Hazardous Substance Standard, or your Supervisor.**
5.
 - A. **Always** seek help when lifting/moving heavy objects.
 - B. When lifting, use large leg muscles; do not bend from waist.
 - C. Pull hand truck except on down incline.
 - D. Push heavy objects, avoid pulling.
6. Use only ladders or approved stools. Do not stand on chairs, tables or boxes.
7. Housekeeping:
 - A. Always keep work areas clean and free from spills or debris.
 - B. Aisles, exits, electrical panels and fire extinguishers **must** be kept clear of materials or equipment at all times.
8. Remain free from alcohol, drugs and other inappropriate behavior during working hours.
9. Machine equipment or tools will only be used after you have received training or authorization to do so.

Tehama County Department of Education Safety and Health rules have been developed, distributed and where applicable, posted, for your information and welfare. You are expected to adhere to them.

Fires and Emergencies

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, DIAL 911.

NOTE: If you are working in the administration building, you must DIAL 9 + 911.

The facility where you work has an emergency procedure to follow in the event of fire or disaster. Exits, fire extinguishers and first-aid kits are located throughout the facility. We also have volunteers trained in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid. Exits and areas around fire extinguishers must be kept clear at all times.

BACK INJURY PREVENTION

TEHAMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Back injuries (sprains, strains and dislocations) occur frequently. The most common diagnosis associated with these injuries is "lumbosacral strain". A strain is an injury to a muscle or its tendon attachment. A sprain is an injury to a ligament. Both of these injuries can range from mild to severe and are categorized as "soft tissue" injuries. Dislocations involving the spine are rare because of the protection offered by the muscles and ligaments, which support the spine. Injuries to the disc structures do occur; however, most authorities agree that "ruptured discs" are the result of cumulative stresses placed on the fibers of the disc. Most of these stresses are caused by poor posture, incorrect body mechanics and physical overexertion to the soft tissues supporting the spine.

The best treatment for overexertion is prevention before they occur. The following suggestions can help reduce the risk of injury.

A. TASK ANALYSIS

Evaluate the task to determine how it might best be accomplished:

1. Can one person safely perform the task?
2. Do you need assistance to perform the task?
3. Can you use assistive devices to make the task easier?

B. "POWER ZONE" LIFTING

The "power zone" is identified as the area directly in front of the body and extends from the floor up to shoulder height. The maximum "power zone" is located between the knees and the waist.

Individuals will have 5 to 7 times the load capacity when using the "power zone" as compared to work performed outside the "power zone."

NOTE: To locate your "power zone", stand with your arms extended in front of your body at shoulder height. Your "power zone" extends in front of you to your wrists. The imaginary square formed by your arms and chest is the top of your "power zone".

Use of the "power zone" will minimize twisting movements while the spine is under stress. This is especially important when heavy loads are lifted to or from the floor or low positioning devices.

C. LIFTING WITH THE BACK MUSCLES "LOCKED-IN"

Most lifting or carrying is accomplished with the back "bowed-out" or rounded. This posture places increased stress on the muscles, ligaments and discs because they are stretched and working at a mechanical disadvantage. Weightlifters lift incredible amounts of weight by locking in the back muscles before lifting. They accomplish this by lifting with the head and shoulders up and the back "bowed-in."

NOTE: This "bowed-in" posture minimizes the stress placed on the posterior wall of lumbar discs. When a lift is performed with the back "bowed-out", a pressure inside the disc increases tremendously. For example, a 180-pound man lifting 70 pounds with the back bowed out can create a pressure of 1,000 pounds inside the fifth lumbar disc. Needless to say, an already weakened disc (the stress wall deteriorates with normal aging) will not withstand the increased stress and may herniate or rupture.

D. STANDING BACK BENDS ARE BENEFICIAL

Much of the work being performed in an office requires to lean forward. Because of gravity and body weight, not to mention the lifting required, employees should perform what is referred to as a "standing back bend."

This is accomplished by standing with the feet placed flat on the floor (no high heels) and hip width apart. Place the palms of both hands on the low back for support and slowly lean backwards as far as comfort allows. Hold this position for 5-10 seconds and return to upright posture. Repeat 3 to 5 times each session. It is a good idea to do a few back bends immediately after working in forward flexed posture. This exercise will help restore the disc pressure to normal and minimize stress on the posterior wall of the disc.

E. NECK AND UPPER BACK FLEXIBILITY

It is important to maintain flexibility and strength in the neck and upper back muscles as well. Such a program includes:

1. head and neck rolling exercises
2. shoulder shrugs and circles
3. stretch arms high overhead
4. place hands behind your neck and slowly pull elbows back
5. place hands behind back and slide them up the spine

SUMMARY

All of the information and exercises given are beneficial to all employees. They have been shared with many employees throughout California schools. When practiced daily these ideas will minimize your risk of overexertion injuries on the job as well as in your personal life.

If you already have an injury and are under a physician's care, check with your physician before doing the exercise. The body mechanics and use of the "power zone" for lifting/carrying apply to everyone.

Most overexertion injuries can be prevented when employees take the time necessary to:

1. Analyze the task
2. Use the Power Zone Concept
3. List with back muscles Locked-In
4. Maintain strength and flexibility throughout the body