

March 30, 2011

MEMORANDUM NO: 011-23HR

TO: Agency Administrators

FROM: Bobbie Chappell

VIA: Rip Colvin, Executive Director

RE: Safety Notes from March 2011

Please find attached the March issues of Safety Notes from Risk Management. Please feel free to distribute to other interested parties.

Thank you.

Andy Snuggs, Senior Management Analyst

Human Resources

227 North Bronough Street, Suite 2100

Tallahassee, FL 32301

Phone: (850) 488-2415, ext. 238

Fax: (850) 922-9445

Email: SnuggsA@justiceadmin.org

Bobbie Chappell, Director of Human Resources
Justice Administrative Commission
227 North Bronough Street, Suite 2100
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Phone: (850) 488-2415 Ext. 249

Fax: (850) 922-9445

“An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.”

~Gandhi

Safety Notes

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 26



QUICK TIPS:

If you work in or around a call center, you have probably encountered angry customers. The following site offers tips on how to handle these situations.

[CALL CENTER STRESS](#)



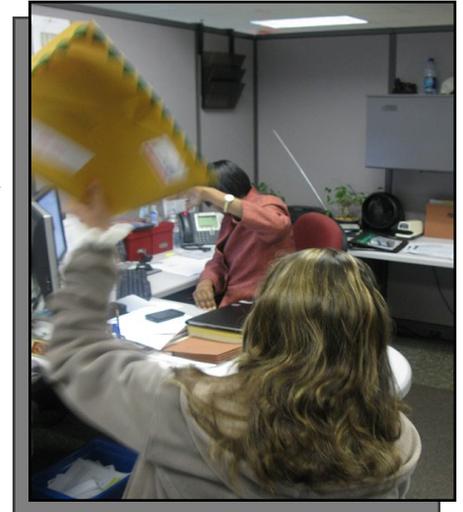
There are many ways to handle disagreements in the workplace. However, some are far more productive than others. The following site contains great examples of how to effectively handle workplace disagreements.

[10 WAYS TO HANDLE DISAGREEMENTS](#)

Workplace Violence

Violence has always been a serious hazard in the workplace. In fact, murder is the fourth leading cause of fatal workplace injury in America. In 2009, 521 out of 4,349 workplace fatalities were homicides. In recent years, economic decline and anxiety associated with job security and heavy workloads have greatly influenced a rise in these types of incidents. Most of these incidents can be prevented if the warning signs are identified and addressed.

Most employees that commit violent acts do not intend to do so when they arrive at work. The events leading up to a violent act are often spread over weeks, months, or even years. The ability to recognize signs of stress, and implement effective communication skills, can greatly reduce the likelihood of future workplace violence. The following website lists many signs of workplace stress. Identifying and reporting these signs are the first, and most important steps in preventing workplace violence.



VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS

Getting Started

The USDA has developed a training publication that can be used to identify, report, and prevent workplace violence. This handbook can be included in your agency's workplace violence training, or as a handout to new employees.

[USDA Workplace Violence Handbook](#)



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(850)413-4756

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*“Those who charm
scorpions and
handle snakes only
brand themselves
with their own
hands.”*

~Sri Guru Granth

QUICK TIPS:

Different insect repellents work on different types of insects. Some can actually attract more bugs. Take time to review the specifications prior to use.



Allergies:

If you have an allergic reaction to an insect bite, reactions to future bites tend to be quicker and more severe. Always be prepared to administer whatever form of treatment that your doctor or allergist has prescribed.

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Insect Stings

Florida's subtropical climate is not only attractive to people; insects enjoy it as well. Last year, 437 state employees were bitten or stung by these insects, many resulting in lost work time. Some of these bites are merely a painful nuisance, while others may be life threatening if left untreated. This hazard, like many others, could be mitigated or prevented through the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). However, insects are everywhere. It would not be practical to wear full-body



PPE 24 hours a day. Since we must accept a certain amount of risk associated with insects and insect bites, we should take every practical measure to reduce our exposure. We should also be prepared to administer first aid to ourselves and others around us. The following website provides comprehensive instructions on how to prevent and treat insect bites. Keep in mind that along with these practices, you should always consult your physician following first aid, especially if you or the bitten individual experiences an allergic reaction to the insect bite.

[Prevent and Treat Insect Bites](#)

Getting Started

Most insects that pose a danger to humans are brightly colored or have become easily identifiable through education and awareness campaigns. However, some highly poisonous insects have a harmless appearance. This week's Safety Notes link will direct you to a website that provides further guidance into the identification of hazardous insects.



[Identify Dangerous Insects](#)

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“A wise man learns by the mistakes of others; a fool, by his own.”

Safety Notes



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QUICK TIPS:

Some objects weigh too much for one person to lift safely, but not enough to require the use of heavy lifting equipment. In this situation, utilize the “team-lift” method.

TEAM LIFTING

If you have to hold your breath while lifting an object, the object is too heavy. Try using a lifting strap, or ask a co-worker for help.



Safe Lifting

Most state jobs require lifting, carrying, or moving objects in the workplace. Some employees may lift only small objects, while others are required to move heavy construction material or debris. No matter what type of lifting we are required to perform, we should always take precautions to reduce our exposure to the risks associated with this activity. While the time-tested, “bend-at-the-knees” method is suitable for lighter objects, other procedures and practices may be a better option for heavy lifting. Employers are required to provide tools and equipment that allow workers to perform their jobs safely. However, it is often the employee’s responsibility to decide when these tools, equipment, and procedures are needed. To aid in this decision process, state employees can download and view the following slide show that focuses on lifting, carrying, and back safety.



BACK SAFETY TRAINING

Getting Started

The Brookhaven National Laboratory has developed a 15-minute back safety lesson that can be delivered during a safety presentation. Take a moment to review this document. It may help you spread best practices in your workplace.



LIFTING AND CARRYING TECHNIQUES

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“The beginning of knowledge is the discovery of something that we do not understand.”

~Frank Herbert

QUICK TIPS:

1. Keeping a full MSDS in each office or supply closet is not practical. Make a copy of the data sheets for chemicals that you use frequently. Post these sheets inside of supply closets and break rooms for quick reference.

2. In some cases, treating a chemical burn with antibiotic ointment can increase pain and tissue damage. Flush the area with large amounts of cool water and seek medical attention.

3. If you are burned by a hazardous material, be ready to provide the chemical name to the doctor’s office. This way, the physician will know exactly how to treat your burn.

Safety Notes

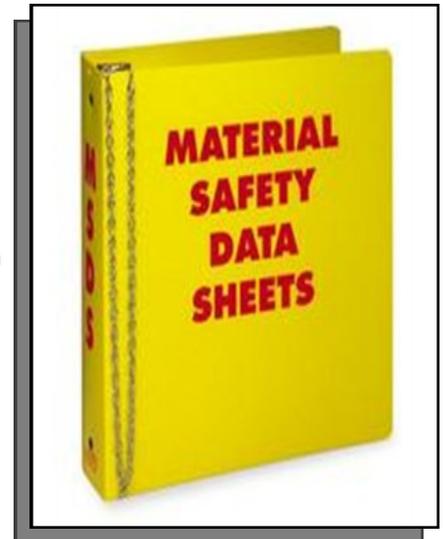
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MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS)

Thousands of state employees work in or around hazardous materials every day. Most have been trained in the handling, disposal, and personal protection against these materials. However, protective measures can be damaged or destroyed in or after an accident. If you were faced with a hazardous material spill in your workplace, would you know how to respond?

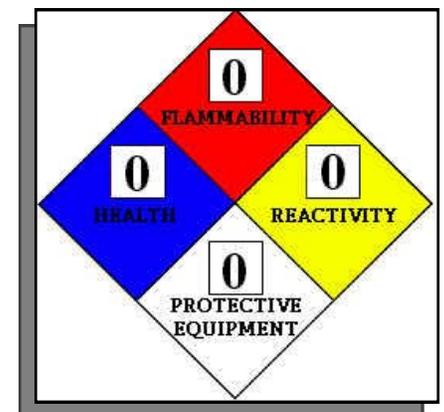
Any workplace that contains hazardous materials — such as bleach, acid, or oil — needs to have a clearly marked MSDS for employees to reference in the event of a hazardous material spill. An MSDS contains crucial information on hazardous material storage, identification, and handling. It also contains important information for emergency services to reference when they respond to an incident or accident. Every employee should know where to locate their MSDS, and how to use it. Please visit the following website to learn more.



HOW TO READ AN MSDS

Getting Started

If you are creating a new MSDS, finding hazardous material information can be a daunting task. The following site lists multiple resources that can be utilized in the development of a comprehensive MSDS for your workplace.



MSDS RESOURCES

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