

June 1, 2011

MEMORANDUM NO: 039-11HR

TO: Agency Administrators
FROM: Bobbie Chappell
VIA: Rip Colvin, Executive Director
RE: Safety Notes from May 2011

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

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"The only real failure in life is not to be true to the best one knows."

~Buddha

Safety Notes

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 32



QUICK TIPS:

Increased blood-flow and flexibility can help to relax sore muscles and achy joints. If your hands get sore after too much typing or writing, shake them out for 30 seconds or squeeze a stress ball 30 times in each hand.



When working on tedious tasks for long periods of time, set a quiet alarm on your phone or computer to alert you every 30 minutes. This will give you a point of reference to know when you need to take a break and stretch.



Repetitive Strain Injury Prevention

Repetitive motion injuries, also known as **RSIs**, are one of the fastest-growing workplace injuries in the country. Over the last 50 years, the U.S. has slowly transitioned from an industrial nation to a nation of vehicle and computer operators. Many workplaces have transformed from factories and assembly lines to office buildings and automated manufacturing plants. This transition from manual labor has been a major factor in the reduction of many workplace injuries, but as the number of sedentary workers has risen, so has the number of RSIs.



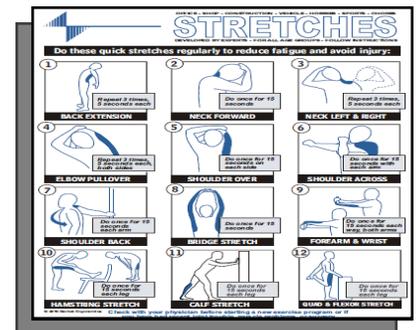
RSIs are some of the most preventable injuries in the workplace since they happen over long periods of time. Through environmental controls (ergonomic equipment), safe work practices (duty rotation), and administrative controls (mandatory stretch breaks), poor posture and improper workplace design can be improved, thus reducing the likelihood of an RSI. The following website contains many pages of useful techniques and exercises that can help you combat the causes and symptoms of an RSI.

[RSI Prevention Techniques](#)

Getting Started

The best way for an employee to prevent an RSI is through scheduled stretching and short rest breaks. The following document is free to download and print. It shows many different stretches that can be done in the workplace in order to increase comfort and reduce the risk of an RSI.

[Workplace Stretching](#)



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(850)413-4756

*“You got to be careful
if you don't know
where you're going,
because you might not
get there.”*

~Yogi Berra

Safety Notes



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 31

QUICK TIPS:

Roadside hazards are multiplied at night and in poor weather. Emergency light-radios, like the one below, can provide light and weather updates without the need for batteries.



Always make sure that someone is aware of your route, and what time you should arrive.

Most thefts and assaults in and around parking areas occur on the lowest levels. After driving around the parking lot to find all possible exits, try to park on a high level that is well-lit and close to a building entrance.

Business Travel Safety

Most state employees will travel for business purposes at some point in their careers. Most will reach their destination, complete their tasks, and return home safely. Some, however, will encounter dangerous situations during the course of their travel.

While we cannot eliminate dangerous situations, we can prepare ourselves and our employees on how to identify these hazards early and reduce their exposure to risky, unpredictable situations. The following website contains an article that provides “33 Travel Safety Tips” that may help you and your team prepare for your next business trip.



[33 Travel Safety Tips](#)

Getting Started

Along with normal driving hazards, other risky situations may arise throughout your trip. The best way to avoid these situations is through thorough trip preparation. The following presentation can be downloaded and used as a pre-travel briefing, or as an addition to your current safety program.



[Travel Safety](#)

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“A man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools.”

~Spanish Proverb

Safety Notes

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QUICK TIPS:

Safety Needles greatly reduce the risk of a post injection needle stick. Instead of returning the needle to its sheath, these needles retract into themselves, thus eliminating the risk of accidental exposure.



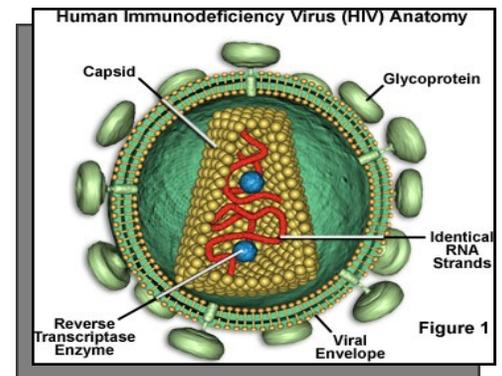
The N95 mask works well in most situations that require protection from dust, airborne particles. Check the list below to make sure that your masks have been approved by the CDC.

CDC APPROVED MASKS



Bloodborne Pathogens

Accidental exposure to bloodborne pathogens continues to pose a significant risk to employees in many state agencies. While most of the incidents involve medical and rescue workers, the risk of exposure extends to all workplaces. Needle sticks and transmissions through open wounds or mucous membranes account for the majority of these exposures.



Given the constant need for medical and rescue services, hazards associated with bloodborne pathogens cannot be completely eliminated. However, controls can be put in place to reduce the likelihood of an accidental exposure while performing job-related duties.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has developed a comprehensive library of resources that can be accessed publicly via the internet in order to supplement your existing exposure control plan. Please take a moment to review the information on their website. You may find the new information or updates on current epidemic trends.

CDC BLOODBORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Getting Started

The best way to prevent your employees from being exposed to a bloodborne pathogen is through the utilization of a comprehensive exposure control plan. OSHA has created a plan that can be used as a template, or as a way to augment your existing plans. The plan can be downloaded from the following website.

OSHA BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS PLAN



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“If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.”

~Dalai Lama

Safety Notes

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 34



QUICK TIPS:

Injured employees should see a doctor as soon as possible after an accident. Studies show that the immediate medical care greatly reduces medical costs and time away from work.



Call your employees throughout their time away from work. This reinforces the idea that they are needed, and that they have not been forgotten.



Return-To-Work Programs

Financial losses, as a result of workplace accidents, continue to rise every year. In 2009, the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) reported that workers' compensation benefits actually grew faster than employee wages.

In an attempt to combat this rapidly increasing cost, and to ease employee anxiety throughout extended absences, multiple types of Return-To-Work (RTW) programs have been implemented by organizations worldwide.

Since the mid 1990s, these RTW programs have shown impressive results toward the reduction of expenses related to extended absences after a workplace accident. Some corporations saw reductions of over 50% in their workers' compensation costs. Individually, average lost-time was reduced by 50% and medical costs were reduced by 54% (Crawford and Company study).

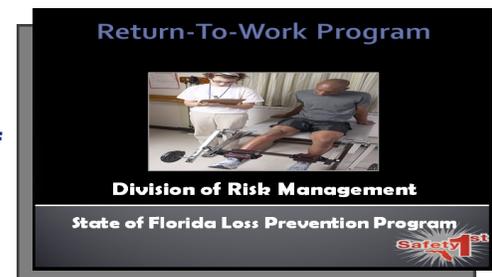
The following RTW guidelines were developed as the result of a multi-agency workgroup, utilizing industry best practices. Take some time to review the attached document.

[MODEL RETURN-TO-WORK GUIDELINES](#)

Getting Started

If you wish to provide training on the elements of a comprehensive RTW program, you can download the power point slide show, including speakers' notes, from the following website.

[RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM](#)



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