

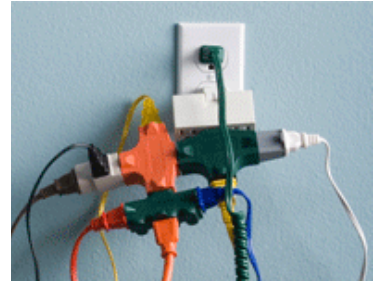


DOAS Loss Control Bulletin

December 2014

Topic of the Month...Office Safety

If you work in an office you don't have to worry about Safety; Right? **WRONG!** A safe office environment requires hazard control, good housekeeping/maintenance, and safe work practices. Arrange your office to allow clear walkways and aisles throughout the rooms and near exits. Do not store heavy items or hang pictures over your head in your office or cube. Close file cabinet drawers, file doors, and pull-out work tables when not in use. To avoid jamming your fingers or hands, make sure that cabinet and desk drawers do not open into walls or other furniture. Close drawers and doors with the flat of your hand.



Slips & Falls – Clean up liquid spills immediately and mark the hazard area with a “wet floor” sign until the floor dries. Prevent falls in the office by keeping walkways and floors clear of trash, cords, cables, and other items. Clean up work areas after each project and periodically throughout the day. Walk slowly, and be aware of your surroundings. Use handrails when going up and down stairs. Wear proper footwear at the office; a non-slip sole and a back strap are the safest. Use chairs for sitting **ONLY!**

Storage – Arrange your storage areas so that the heavier items are stored between knee and shoulder height and keep lighter-weight items on upper shelves. Keep a sturdy step stool in storage areas to avoid reaching.

Ergonomic – Request an ergonomic evaluation from your supervisor if you feel discomfort while at your desk or performing other tasks at work. Use good body mechanics when lifting and moving items. When you must carry files, limit your load to your capabilities. Avoid bending at the waist when accessing low files. If you must access low files, either stoop down or get on your knees. Avoid twisting and reaching for files or other materials in your work station. Move your whole body to prevent back strain. Report hazards to your supervisor and make sure that they get corrected.

Fire Safety – Be prepared for an emergency in your building. Know your building emergency procedures, evacuation routes, and assembly area. Know how to use a fire extinguisher and when it is safe to do so. Keep exits and aisle walkways clear to allow a quick evacuation. Use only approved electrical equipment in the office. Examine electric cords and plugs for breaks, tears, and frayed wires before use. Do not use extension cords as a permanent source of electrical power; install an extra electric outlet if necessary. Do not create chains of extension cords and surge protectors (“daisy-chains”) because they can overload your electrical outlets.



Security – Employees should never leave personal and/or valuable items in plain sight while they are away from their desks. Most companies are not held liable for the loss of personal items on the job. Lockers and lock-enabled desks should be available to every worker.

First Aid – Every worker should know the exact location of a first-aid kit they can use for minor ailments such as small cuts, headaches, muscle cramps and inflamed areas. The kits should be well-stocked and up-to-date at all times (no expired medications).

Like any other workplace you cannot “ASSUME” offices are safe. But with a little effort, we can all have a safe work environment.

Thanks for your time. Let's work together to make Georgia a safer place to work.