

College of Forestry 500: Office and General Safety

Safety Policy & Procedure Manual
Section 500: Office and General Safety
Effective: 01 January 2007
Revised: August 2014

PURPOSE

The purpose of this section is to provide information to help protect employees and students from the health hazards presented by office and general building environments.

Background Information

OR-OSHA does not currently provide specific guidelines or requirements for administrative and classroom environments. However, the College is intent on providing a safe and orderly working and learning place for all employees and students. To this end, each employee has an obligation to their co-workers, to students and to themselves to be aware of potential hazards, and then to prevent, remove or report hazards and unsafe conditions.

General

- Safety is the highest priority during all laboratory activities
- Safety is an attitude
- Most accidents are the result of complacency and quite often happen to experienced workers
- Safety is a team effort as well as an individual effort

The following hazards and remedies may seem like common sense, but a moment's distraction or leaving a potential problem for someone else to resolve can quickly result in an accident and injury.

- Pathways, stairwells, and doors must be clear of obstacles. Unexpected obstacles become trip hazards, and could impede emergency exiting of the building.
 - Pick-up items left on the floor.
 - Store boxes and materials in proper shelving/closets/storerooms.
 - Place items for custodial or surplus removal out of the way.
 - Report damaged flooring or carpeting.
 - Clean up beverage spills immediately.
 - Know your emergency exit routes; post plan near doorways.
- Electrical and wiring problems can cause shocks, fires, and trips.
 - Use power strips for multiple connections, but do not overload electrical capacity.
 - Do not use extension cords for permanent power.
 - Secure wires and cords away from walkways.
 - Use only UL listed electrical equipment.
 - Maintain the grounding pin on all plugs.
 - Match plugs and outlets – College buildings have a variety of voltage configurations in use.
- Portable electrical equipment can cause fires, burns, and other injuries.
 - Space heaters are not recommended, but if used they must contain tip-over protection, be utilized away from flammable materials, and have adequate amperage at the outlet.
 - Fans must have proper cage guards around blades, and should be properly balanced on stands or the floor.
 - Coffee makers and toasters should only be used in kitchen type areas and must have appropriate safety switches for the heating elements.

- Furniture is to be used and positioned in ways that avoid trips, falls, strains and pinches.
 - o Close drawers and cabinet doors when not in use.
 - o Don't open more than one drawer at a time on file cabinets.
 - o Use handles when opening and closing drawers.
 - o Don't place heavy equipment/boxes on unstable desks, chairs or tables.
 - o Desk, chair and equipment should be ergonomically compatible with the user.

- Handling heavy boxes and equipment can cause back injuries and falls.
 - o Lift by bending and using the legs, not bending over with the back.
 - o Avoid carrying items that block your vision.
 - o Do not try picking up more than you can safely handle.
 - o Use stepladders or stepstools for overhead reaching.

- Office supplies, copier toner, cleaners or glues may contain chemicals that are irritants/poisons if swallowed, breathed or spilled on skin.
 - o Read labels or material safety data sheets for items being used in your office and be aware of any appropriate safety precautions or response procedures for accidental exposure.
 - o Follow the proper instructions for installing toner cartridges in copiers, and properly dispose of waste cartridges.

- Sharp instruments can cause cuts or puncture wounds.
 - o Store paper cutters with blades in down position.
 - o Only use utility knives or razors with blade guards.
 - o Remove staples with a staple remover.
 - o Put away scissors after use and carry with blades aimed downward.

- Spilled blood and certain bodily fluids are automatically considered infectious and require proper clean-up and handling. Vomit is not considered infectious and requires no special handling. In general, spilled bodily fluids means paramedics will likely be on site, and the same applies for large amounts of blood.
 - o Employees should not directly touch the blood of others.
 - o Minor (small scratch or cut) amounts of blood and absorbent material can be disposed of by the bleeder in a toilet, sink or plastic waste bag.
 - o Blood on hard surfaces must be sanitized with bleach or other EPA approved disinfectant. Since neither these materials nor disposable gloves are generally available, the custodial team should be contacted at 737-2157.