

# SAFETY MATTERS



SCSRM  
Southern California Schools  
Risk Management



**Tailgate Safety Talks  
for School Employees**

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## Office Safety Matters

Compared to an industrial work environment, an office can seem like a safe place to work. However, many serious accidents and injuries occur on a regular basis in offices everywhere. Slips, trips and falls are one of the most common causes of workplace injuries.

Falls, fires and electric shock often injure office workers. They may receive cuts and bruises from office tools and furniture. They may develop long-term injuries from repetitive work such as keyboarding.

As you go through your day, utilize these safe work practices:

- ❖ Watch for obstructions that can cause tripping accidents. Cords and cables should not be placed across traffic areas. Even cords going to a power bar located next to a workstation can trip a person getting up from their desk.
- ❖ Materials should be stored in designated storage areas, not in boxes on the floor.
- ❖ Briefcases, handbags and other personal items should be stored where no one will fall over them.
- ❖ Keep drawers of desks and cabinets closed.
- ❖ Clean up any spills, such as coffee or water, right way. If a spill cannot be taken care of immediately, arrange a barricade and a sign to warn people. Floors that are wet from cleaning should also be blocked off and marked by warning signs.



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- ❖ Load file cabinets from the bottom up. Serious accidents have occurred when top-heavy filing cabinets have fallen over.
- ❖ Use safe lifting techniques. To pick up a heavy item, squat down beside it. Use the strength in your legs, not your back, to raise it up. Bend your knees, not your back.
- ❖ Store sharp objects such as scissors, paper knives, and letter openers separately from other items to prevent cuts and puncture wounds.
- ❖ Be alert to electrical hazards, which can cause fires and electrocution. Check for any frayed or damaged cords or plugs. Only qualified personnel should make electrical repairs.
- ❖ Don't overload electrical circuits. Extension cords should only temporarily, so make sure the area is wired adequately for all of the electronic equipment such as computers, copiers and printers. Breakers that trip frequently may indicate a sign of overloaded circuits.

- ❖ Don't use makeshift scaffolds such as a chair balanced on a desk when you are reaching for something overhead. Take the time to get a stepladder or stepstool.
- ❖ Repetitive strain injuries are increasingly common in offices. When doing work such as computer keyboarding, keep your hands and wrists straight and relaxed. Frequently switch to other tasks to give your hands a rest.

\* You are receiving this email because you have previously subscribed to Safety Bill Says. *Safety Matters* is now SCSRM's communication for tailgate safety talks.

Please note the above recommendations are for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

