

news & notes

YOUR ROLE IN EMERGENCIES

You may think that it can't happen here, but it can! Be prepared to respond properly and safely to these types of emergencies:

- Fires
- Explosions
- Hazardous chemical spills or leaks
- Natural disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, or floods
- Terrorist events

Know what to do in emergencies, including any assigned response tasks, such as:

- Account for employees after an evacuation
- Help others to evacuate
- Close windows and doors
- Shut down equipment
- Rescue or response tasks that require special training

Learn the basics of emergency response:

- Read, understand, and follow the Emergency Action Plan.
- Know how to evacuate the area safely.
- Know the locations of fire exits, fire extinguishers, and alarms.
- Know whom to contact in an emergency.
- Know basic first aid.
- Know how to use a fire extinguisher.

Do your part to help keep emergencies from turning into disasters!



“So, you were supposed to paint the ‘Preparedness Month’ signs, and you forgot the paper, the brushes and the paint?”



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HSB Safety News

September 2010

Be Prepared!

September Is National Preparedness Month

To help workplaces prepare for emergencies, such as natural disasters or terrorist events, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS - www.dhs.gov) has set up www.ready.gov/business. What can YOU do to be prepared?

- **Know the risks.** What kind of natural disasters happen in your area? What businesses or buildings in your area (your workplace included) may be terrorist targets, such as government buildings, military bases, transportation centers, or large utility companies?
- **Know workplace procedures.** Learn the emergency plan and your role in it (see sidebar), including location of first aid and emergency supply kits, fire alarm pulls and extinguishers, essential shut-down procedures, when to leave and when to shelter in place, exit routes, and other items for your workplace.
- **Know how to communicate.** Learn where and to whom to report when you exit your workplace. Know where to get emergency information from your workplace and/or public safety announcements regarding when it's safe to return to work or to leave your building.

You also need to be prepared at home. According to www.ready.gov, here's what every citizen should have in their home emergency kit:

- ✓ Water—1 gallon of water per person per day for at least 3 days, for drinking and sanitation
- ✓ Food—at least a 3-day supply of nonperishable food
- ✓ Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- ✓ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ✓ First-aid kit—see website for items to include
- ✓ Whistle to signal for help
- ✓ Dust mask—to help filter contaminated air, and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- ✓ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ✓ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ✓ Can opener for food if kit contains canned food
- ✓ Local maps

Check the website for further items you may include, such as prescription medications; family documents like insurance policies; cash and travelers' checks; and fire extinguishers and emergency reference material.



Priceless Eyesight

Protect it with the right equipment

Make sure you use the right eye and face protection to prevent eye injuries. Check with your supervisor before starting every job.

Safety Glasses:

- Are stronger and safer than regular glasses
- Protect against flying objects
- Don't protect against hazardous fumes or gases

Safety Goggles:

- Protect against flying objects, sparks, splashes, dust
- Generally offer better protection than safety glasses
- May be indirectly ventilated to keep out splashes and dust

Helmets:

- Protect head and neck against sparks, splashes, intense light
- Resist heat and impact
- Must be worn with safety glasses or goggles

Face Shields:

- Protect face and neck against splashes, flying objects, heat, glare, light
- Don't offer full head protection
- Must be worn with safety glasses or goggles underneath

If you wear prescription glasses or contact lenses, you may need to wear special eye protection. Contact lens wearers should not wear them for certain jobs.

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TAKE CARE OF YOUR CAMERA

If you own an expensive movie or video camera, you take good care of it. Why, then, would you treat your personal camera—your irreplaceable eyes—as if they were less valuable than the man-made imitations?

Protect your eyes because they have no substitute if they are damaged. The cornea that shields the eye is capable of out-performing the best optics ever produced, but it is paper-thin and delicate, so must be safeguarded diligently.

First, get your vision tested. If you need prescription lenses, get shatter-resistant, properly fitted frames of a recommended type for maximum protection, and wear the glasses faithfully. Get your vision rechecked periodically.

Second, wear eye safety protection whenever work hazards require them.

Finally, follow these eye safety tips:

- ⇒ Never wear cracked, pitted, or otherwise damaged glasses or goggles; turn them in for a new pair.
- ⇒ Avoid looking directly into any source of brilliant or potentially harmful light unless your eyes are shielded.
- ⇒ Wipe your face and eyes with clean hands only, to avoid transferring dirt or other material to the eyes.
- ⇒ If something does get into the eye, do not rub it; get the proper first aid immediately.
- ⇒ If eyes are burned by heat or chemicals, flush immediately with cool water for several minutes. Seek medical attention.
- ⇒ If you feel your eyes straining, close your eyes or focus on a far distance. Hold a clean cloth wet with cool water gently over your closed eyes.

Ethics Quiz

Test your knowledge of workplace ethics

1. Business ethics is a set of rules by which to judge decisions and actions in the workplace. **True (T) or False (F)**
2. Business ethics is only important because it is required by law. **T F**
3. The company's ethics policy gives guidelines for employee conduct. **T F**
4. If you're losing sleep over a decision you made and the decision makes you feel uncomfortable, you might have an ethical problem. **T F**
5. A quick way to check if a course of action is unethical is to imagine that it is:
 - a. Reported in the newspaper
 - b. Possible to keep secret
 - c. Something that would make your family proud of you
6. When making decisions with ethical issues, consider options carefully. **T F**
7. When dealing with ethical issues, be entirely rational with no emotion. **T F**

ANSWERS

1. T 2. F. Ethical behavior is also required by policy and by good business sense. Ethical conduct and decision making is good for business and the well being of employees. 3. T 4. T 5. a. If you would be ashamed to see what you propose to do on the front page of the morning newspaper, it's likely unethical. 6. T. 7. F. It's often your feelings that are telling you something's wrong. Pay attention to gut reactions. They may be more revealing than your logical thoughts.



Live Well, Live Long

Take care of mental and emotional health

According to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS):

- ⇒ In 1900, the average life expectancy at birth in the United States was 47.3.
- ⇒ In 1950, the average life expectancy was 68.2
- ⇒ In 2004, it was 77.9.

In fact, research shows if you live a healthy lifestyle, you could well surpass the normal life expectancy—and you’ll be in good shape to enjoy your longer retirement without the chronic diseases that can come with aging.

Check out the online life expectancy calculators developed by Dr. Thomas Perls. Visit <http://www.livingto100.com> to find out your estimated life expectancy as well as personalized recommendations for increasing it. Here’s how to take care of your mental and emotional health:

1. **Be a lifelong learner.** Continue to learn—whether it’s new technology (Internet, cell phones), new hobbies (gardening, woodworking, yoga), or new cultures (travel, neighbors).
2. **Be involved.** Make and keep social connections through volunteering (www.seniorcorps.gov), religious groups, senior centers, or community classes.
3. **Be hopeful.** Demonstrate a positive, can-do attitude in all circumstances. Don’t worry; look for solutions, and take action.

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A SHOCKING TALE

Corporal Brown borrowed his brother’s car when he was home on a furlough and decided to wash it. After washing the car, he noticed that the interior was dirty, so he decided to vacuum it. Tragically, when he turned on the vacuum cleaner while standing on the wet driveway, the death that he had escaped in combat suddenly struck him down.

This is a true story, and one that could have been avoided. The three major factors involved in electrical accidents are:

1. Lack of knowledge and precautions,
2. Ignoring hazards, *and*
3. Neglect.

Educate yourself about electricity. For example, did you know that mild shocks can also be dangerous? The severity of a shock is measured by three factors:

1. The quantity of current flowing through the body,
2. The path of the current as it passes through the body, *and*
3. The duration of the current.

When working with electrical equipment:

- ☐ Never stand on wet or damp surfaces.
- ☐ Inspect tools before using.
- ☐ Don’t use a tool if it appears to be broken, defective, or in poor condition. Report it.
- ☐ Never attempt to repair or adjust portable electric tools while they’re plugged in.
- ☐ Don’t use them in the presence of flammable vapors or gases unless they are especially designed for such use.
- ☐ Return tools to their proper places.

Help Keep Violence Out

Take security seriously

You can help keep violence out of your workplace.

- Wear your identification badge, and don’t lend it to others.
- Keep security doors closed and locked.
- Escort visitors to the work area after they sign in and obtain a name tag.
- Obey rules against weapons, drugs, and alcohol at work.
- Set up a “danger signal” with co-workers.
- Know security and police phone numbers.
- Lock up purses and valuables.
- Tell security if you see a stranger with no identification in a work area.

Know how to recognize potentially violent behavior, such as someone who:

- Threatens violence
- Threatens to “get even” with you, co-workers, or supervisors
- Tries repeatedly to intimidate you or others
- Talks a lot about weapons
- States that others are out to “get” him or her
- Holds grudges
- Blames others for problems
- Displays frequent, unreasonable anger
- Combines disturbing behaviors with substance abuse

Report behavior that concerns you. You may head off violence and get people the help they need.



Depression at Work

It's common, costly—and treatable

According to a recent report by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMSHA - www.oas.samhsa.gov), almost 15 percent of adults over the age of 18 (31 million) have experienced a major depression episode (MDE) in their lives. In addition, the two age groups that had the highest rate of MDEs in the past year (more than 10 percent each) were those aged 18 to 25 and 35 to 49—in other words, **people in the prime of their working lives.**

The good news is that depression is also highly treatable—more than 80 percent can successfully overcome clinical depression—as long as sufferers seek treatment. So if you think you (or a co-worker) may be depressed (see the sidebar), take these steps:

- **Seek treatment**—and encourage others to do so. Some people don't speak up because they worry how it will affect their career or that their insurance won't cover treatment. But the earlier people seek help, the more quickly they can recover. If your employer has an employee assistance program (EAP), write your EAP officer's name and phone here: _____.
- **Speak with your doctor** to get a complete diagnostic evaluation including onset, frequency, and severity of symptoms; family history; other medications you're taking and possible side effects; and other relevant information.
- **Follow the prescribed treatment**, which may include antidepressant medications, psychotherapy, or alternative remedies.

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ARE YOU DEPRESSED?

Use this list from the National Institute of Mental Health (www.nlm.nih.gov).

- Ongoing sad, anxious, or empty feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Irritability or restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies that were once enjoyable, including sex
- Constant tiredness
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, or making decisions
- Insomnia or sleeping all the time
- Overeating or loss of appetite
- Thinking of or attempting suicide
- Ongoing aches, pains, headaches, cramps or digestive problems

If you experience these symptoms for more than 2 weeks, seek help.

ARTHRITIS RISK FACTORS

Arthritis.org lists these factors:

- Older than 40
- Female
- More than 10 pounds overweight
- Severe knee or hip injury
- Family member has arthritis

If you have any factors, take these steps:

- Lose weight.
- Gain muscle through strength-training.
- Strengthen bones with weight-bearing exercise.
- Take more calcium.
- Consume vitamin C and other antioxidants.
- Include Omega-3 fatty acids in your diet.
- Limit caffeine.

ADA and You

What you need to know

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the federal law that makes it illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities. One out of six Americans has a disability, but that doesn't mean that person has no ability. People with disabilities want to be judged by their abilities, not by their disabilities.

Examine your attitudes about disabilities and people with disabilities.

- Don't let prejudices or fears interfere with your relationships on the job.
- Consider how you'd respond to this person if he or she didn't have a disability.
- Reaffirm that everyone deserves the right to earn a living and lead a productive work life.

You may work with co-workers with a variety of disabilities. For example:

- Speech impairment
- Visual impairment or blindness
- Learning disabilities
- Hearing impairment or deafness
- Limited mobility

Here's how to work effectively with co-workers with disabilities:

- Ask before providing help.
- Let people with disabilities decide what they can't do or aren't interested in.
- Speak as you would to anyone.
- Include co-workers with disabilities in work and work-related social activities.
- Keep your sense of humor.