



San Benito County Safety & Health Newsletter

Announcements

- Training "Coping with Difficult People" by Tom McKee – Contact Dina Bies for details 636-4000

Individual Highlights:

Desks Safety Hazard	1
Personal Violence	1
Driving in Rain	2
Health Life Style	3
Answers to Quiz	4
What's Wrong With this	
Picture	5

Desks and Workstations Have Safety Hazards, too

Left unchecked, people who sit at desks, workstations and cubicles can create plenty of safety hazards for themselves and for those who sit near them.

Test your knowledge of office hazards by answering TRUE or FALSE to the following statements.

1. Though it may be unsightly, desktop clutter such as old

papers, boxes and the like really isn't a workplace safety hazard.

2. Extension cords are OK to use at cubicles as long as the cords are carefully routed along the bottom edge of the cubicle.

3. A small floor mat thrown over a carpet tear is an

acceptable short-term fix.

4. Open drawers are a safety hazard because people can walk into them, or trip over them

❖ *ANSWERS FOUND ON PAGE 4*

Personal Violence Protection

Anyone can become the victim of workplace violence, but certain workers are at a higher risk including those that serve the public, are in health care, social services, and criminal justice settings, or work late nights or early mornings, or work in high crime areas. Workplace violence can be a verbal or physical assault, robbery, rape or homicide. Be alert to potentially violent situations. Know how to respond appropriately and how to

protect yourself from harm.

Take all threats seriously. Immediately report any perceived threat or violent incident to your supervisor. If you recognize signs of a potentially violent or disturbed individual, let your supervisor know. If you believe that you are at risk for workplace violence, follow the recommended guidelines to ensure your safety.

When faced with a hostile person, respect their

personal space and be aware of your body language, movements, and tone of voice. Stay calm and diffuse the situation. Try to keep a barrier like a desk between yourself and the person, but don't block yourself into a corner. If there is no barrier available, stand at an angle and 4 to 6 feet from the person.

Know and follow the policies for opening and closing your place of business.

Tips for Driving in Rain



Rainy driving tips - In stormy conditions, it is more difficult to see other vehicles, road signs and the road itself. It is critical to make sure you can see and be seen.

- First and foremost: slow down! It takes longer to stop or adjust in wet weather.
- Stay toward the middle lanes - water tends to pool in the outside lanes.
- Maintain proper following distance (3 Second Rule). This needs to be increased in wet weather.
- Drive in the tracks of a car ahead of you.
- Don't follow large trucks or busses too closely. The spray created by their large tires reduces your vision. Take care when passing them as well; if you must pass, do so quickly and safely.
- Be more alert when driving in wet or slippery conditions. Watch out for brake lights in front of you. Avoid using your brakes; if possible, take your foot off the accelerator to slow down.
- Turn your headlights on even in a light rain, or in gloomy, foggy or overcast conditions. Not only do they help you see the road, but they'll help other drivers see you. If your car has daytime running lights you still should put them on, so vehicles behind you can see you better.
- Avoid off-road driving: it's hard to judge the actual depth of puddles and you can easily become stuck, even in an SUV.
- Never drive beyond the limits of visibility. At night rainy roads become especially treacherous. The glare of oncoming lights, amplified by the rain on your windshield, can cause temporary loss of visibility while substantially increasing driver fatigue. In rainy conditions pedestrians, livestock, and wildlife are extremely hard to spot and even harder to avoid.

SLOW DOWN! This should be obvious but it's also very important. People are so used to driving certain speeds on certain roads that sometimes they forget the need to slow down when inclement weather presents itself.

Incorporate Some Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors into Your Workday

1. Eat a balanced breakfast before you come to work- include some whole grain and healthy fiber, some lean protein for staying power and maybe even some fruit to get you started on your fruits and veggies for the day! One of my favorite quick breakfasts is peanut butter toast on whole wheat bread and low fat cottage cheese with fruit. 1/2 cup of cottage cheese has as much protein as 2 eggs! A breakfast like that will stay with you all morning and help you to focus and concentrate on your work. The fiber and protein will stabilize your blood sugars and keep your insulin levels low which helps limit/prevent fat storage. If you need a breakfast you can eat on the go, consider a turkey or peanut butter sandwich on whole grain bread or an energy bar that has less than 3 grams of saturated fat and has at least 3 grams of fiber and 10 grams of protein.
2. Drink water all day long to stay hydrated. You need water for food to be converted into energy. Water will quench your thirst better than any other fluid and it's calorie free! Work to eliminate sugary drinks which add calories but not nutritional value. Drinks don't make you feel full or cause you to eat less. Even 100% fruit juices should be limited to 4 to 6 ounces per day (it's better to eat the whole fruit and get the fiber).
3. If you need a warm drink (especially at this time of the year!) coffee is okay in moderation (it's from a plant and offers antioxidants) but tea may be even better! Tea is lower in caffeine and offers polyphenols—these beneficial compounds are not found in herbal teas. Green tea and white tea have the most health benefits but black tea is also beneficial. Red tea (Rooibos) is really from a bush in Africa but also offers lots of antioxidants. White tea is also very high in antioxidants. If you do drink coffee, learn to drink it without all of the extras. A little milk is okay but when you add in lot of syrup, whole milk and whipped cream as in lattes, you are really racking up the calories!
4. Control the clutter in your work area. Why? Because clutter adds stress! Stress is hard on our bodies and we often cope with it in unhealthy ways—such as stuffing food in our faces, grinding our teeth, elevating our BP. Did you know stress makes you crave carbohydrates and fat? Stress raises the cortisol level in the body and that also contributes to fat storage.
5. Take a stretch break every 2 to 3 hours. This improves flexibility and increases blood circulation and will also help to clear your mind. Just bend over and aim for those toes and clasp your hands and raise your arms overhead.
6. Fitness is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. Activity will give you energy and alertness and improve the quality of your life. Activity helps with energy balance. For good health you need 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous activity each day. (60 minutes for weight loss). You can break this into smaller time slots and get started on it during your workday. With careful planning you could get in your entire 30 minutes and not have to worry about additional activity before or after work! Find a co-worker and take a walk on a break or use part of your lunch hour. Find a reason to run errands or go speak to someone in another part of the building or on campus rather than sending an e-mail. If you use a pedometer a good goal is to record your steps/miles for a few days to get your baseline and then try to add 500 extra steps daily--that's about a ¼ mile. Your ultimate goals should be to gradually work up to 10,000 steps per day (about 5 miles.) A major study showed this level will improve fitness and lower blood pressure and body fat.
7. Bring your lunch for healthy selections, to control portions and save money! A healthy lunch would include a serving of vegetable or a salad, a serving of fruit, a serving of milk or dairy such as low fat cheese or yogurt, a serving of protein (meat, chicken, eggs, peanut butter, beans) and a healthy drink (milk, ice tea or water). A sandwich is easy to pack. Make it with whole wheat bread, pita or tortilla. Add lean protein, veggies such as lettuce, cucumbers, and tomato, skip the mayo but add mustard for flavor. For variety, bring a salad with added protein, pasta or brown rice with canned beans or lean meat, hummus with fresh veggies and pita triangles, cottage cheese and fruit. Lean frozen meals are another easy option and they do offer portion control! Save the containers and use them with your leftovers from home to make sure you are bringing an appropriate portion.
8. Try not to eat out more than once or twice a week. It's costly both to your wallet and your waistline. If you end up doing fast food, aim for more nutrient dense choices. (These are foods with the most nutrition for the mouthful and least amount of calories—for instance a potato is more nutrient dense than French fries or potato chips). Think small and avoid the value meals and larger portions. Some better choices would be a small burger or grilled chicken with added lettuce, tomato and onion—hold the mayo and sauce. Or an entrée salad with lean protein and veggies and low calorie dressing. Consider a grilled steak taco or bean burrito with lettuce, tomato and salsa—watch the cheese and sour cream! How about a baked potato with broccoli or chili and just a sprinkle of cheese? Healthier sides would be yogurt parfait, sliced apples or oranges or a side green salad. To drink either low fat milk or water—pass on the soda (diet okay but some studies indicate it may cause you to crave sweets). If you go out to a bona fide restaurant, beware of the large portions and dressings, sauces and condiments on the side. Eat only half of your meal and ask for the rest to go (lunch for the next day!) Did you know the average meal in France is 25% smaller than in US?
9. If you eat in the office, try not to eat at your desk or while doing other tasks! You will not be fully aware of what you are eating. Practice mindful eating—pay attention to all aspects of eating so you are mindful of what, how much and how quickly you eat. Rapid eating doesn't give time for the message to get from the stomach to the brain that you are satisfied (20 minutes). Take time to savor the aroma and flavor of your food! It will be more satisfying to you!

10. Snacks are a must at work as we really should eat every 3-5 hours. If you have a very early breakfast, you will need a mid-morning snack. Many people have the idea that snacks mean “junk food” but snacks should really contribute to your daily nutrition. (You should have a list of Smart snacks). Snacks fill the gap between meals, stabilize your blood sugar and keep you from becoming so ravenous that you make poor choices or overeat at the next meal. An afternoon snack can carry you through so that you can get home and make dinner without eating everything in sight! At the office, snacks need to be something you can stash in a drawer or the refrigerator. Additional snacks might be canned fruit or applesauce, low fat pudding, rice cakes, instant oatmeal, vegetable bean or lentil soup, water pack tuna. Remember this is not a meal! You are aiming for 100-200 calories with nutritional value.

11. I must mention office potlucks and treats as I know this is a big issue in many work places! Take the opportunity to bring something delicious which also happens to be healthy (fruit plate, veggie tray, salad) And respect the right of your co-workers to refuse to indulge if they choose. NO sabotaging the healthy eating habits of others!

12. Find a partner or buddy with similar goals who will support and encourage you in your healthy behaviors and goals. Meet with him/her regularly to discuss your progress and ask them to hold you accountable and to support and encourage you.

Answers To The Quiz on Page 1

1. FALSE. Stacks of old paper and boxes that sit around collecting dust are safety problems because they present a fire hazard. Too much clutter can also make it difficult to get out of a building quickly in an emergency.
2. FALSE. Workers in an office setting should avoid using extension cords except for short periods. Electrical devices should always be plugged directly into outlets.
3. TRUE. It's better to cover a carpet tear with a small floor mat rather than leaving it exposed and doing nothing at all.
4. TRUE. Open drawers on desks or file cabinets are the bane of office safety. Fact is, most office workers take this risk way too lightly! Open drawers can make file cabinets unstable, leading to a tipover. People can also trip on open drawers, smash a shin, or at a minimum, rip a pair of slacks.

What's Wrong With This Picture?????



I hope you all are enjoying this safety newsletter.
If you have any safety stories/information or suggestions you would like posted, please send me an email.

Dina Bies
481 Fourth Street
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 636-4000
(831) 636-4010 fax
dbies@cao.co.san-benito.ca.us