

OFFICE SAFETY



Open cabinet drawers present a trip hazard and a striking object hazard



Contact OHS if you experience discomfort at your workstation

With this toolbox talk, we will discuss how to keep a clean and safe office environment.

Storage:

A common problem found in offices is a lack of space. But a lack of space should not be used as an excuse to improperly store boxes, copier paper, etc.

- **Storage of Office Materials:**
 - Keep all storage of combustible materials (cardboard, paper) to an absolute minimum as they can pose both a fire and trip hazard.
 - Never store combustibles near electrical outlets.
 - Place heavier objects on lower shelves.
 - Ensure all shelves are sturdy and will be able to handle the load
 - Never block hallways, doors, and stairwells with stored office materials
 - There should always be clear access to electrical panels, fire extinguishers, AEDs, and fire pull stations.

Scheduled Cleaning:

- It is a good idea to schedule a few days a year to go through all your paper files and purge un-needed documents.
- Remove unnecessary objects/supplies/ books from shelving units.
 - Assess if you need more shelving space and order/install what is needed to eliminate floor storage.
- Take the time to clean and sanitize your workstation as needed.
 - Keyboards and telephones, in particular, should be cleaned and sanitized

Common Office Injuries:

- **Slips, Trips and Falls** are the most common cause of office injuries:
 - Slipping on wet/slick floors (Clean up any spills immediately)
 - Tripping over electrical cords/wires, open cabinet doors (Secure cords/ drawers)
 - Damaged flooring (Report any loose tiles, frayed/torn carpeting etc. to Facilities)
 - Objects stored on the floor (Utilize shelf/desk space wherever possible)
 - Using a chair/box for a stepladder (Always use a stepladder)
- **Struck By or Striking Objects:**
 - Bumping into doors, open drawers etc.
 - Bumping into other people while walking
 - Struck by suddenly opened doors or falling objects
- **Overexertion and Strains:**
 - Picking up a load incorrectly (Refer to our Lifting Safety Toolbox Talk for additional information)
 - Repetitive Stress injuries resulting from your workstation



FM-OHS:

fm-ohs@virginia.edu

(434) 297-6379

Group Discussion Topics:

- Assess your workstation and correct all possible hazards.
- Is anyone in the office experiencing discomfort at their workstation? Contact OHS for an ergonomic evaluation of your workstation.
- Understand all evacuation routes from your office and where all the safety equipment is located (Fire Extinguishers, First Aid kits, AEDs, etc.)