



The Safety Zone

The Newsletter of the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust

Elementary ergonomics

Know the principles of how to work safely

The need for a knowledge of effective ergonomics, or fitting the work environment to the worker's needs, is critical across a variety of industries and workplaces.

Direct and indirect costs associated with back injuries in the healthcare industry are reported at \$20 billion annually.

The University of Massachusetts - Lowell has developed an ergonomics curriculum built around the following concepts:

- Ergonomics refers to changing the job, not the worker. It is the art and science of fitting the job and the workplace to workers' needs.
- Ergonomics acknowledges the physical limits to being human, including limits to the force that can be sustained, the amount of energy we need to work, the amount of stress we can take and how many things we can concentrate on at once without getting hurt or sick.
- The amount of pain one feels is often an indication of an ergonomic disorder. Daily pain gradually turns into a musculoskeletal disorder.
- Pain is just one indication of a problem. Other early warning signs include burning, cramping, numbness, swelling, tingling, weakness or fatigue.
- In order to decide how to change a job so workers don't get hurt, the first step is to find out what about the job is causing the problems.



- Ergonomic hazard analysis is a skill and tool that can help eliminate risk factors and improve worker health and comfort.

These ergonomic principles can apply to every job and every workplace, so consider talking with your supervisor to learn more about how to apply ergonomic tips in your job.

news & notes

BEST PRACTICES IN THE NEW YEAR *Resolve to stay safe in 2017*

Arbill Industries, Inc., a provider of safety products and services, has developed these best practices to create a safe work environment.

- **Don't take shortcuts.** It's natural to want to get the job finished on or even ahead of schedule. But the "get-it-done-quick" attitude can be a recipe for disaster. Stick to the instructions and get all your questions answered.
- **Be careful on the road.** Inspect your vehicle, including brake lights, turn signals, tire pressure and amount of gas in the tank, before each trip and get repairs made immediately.
- **Watch the weather.** Both indoor and outdoor work can expose you to extreme temperatures. In cold conditions dress in layers and properly cover your head, feet, hands, and face - the body parts most prone to frostbite.
- **Make personal protective equipment (PPE) a priority.** It's not enough to wear PPE. You should also know how to properly use goggles, face protection, gloves, safety shoes, hard hats, and ear protection.
- **Keep things ship shape.** Good housekeeping does more than keep the workplace neat. It can prevent serious incidents like trips and falls, fires and chemical spills. Fix hazards or report them immediately.



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AHAWCSIT



419 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205

AHA Services, Inc.

Tina Creel, Group Manager
Phone: 501-224-7878
Fax: 501-224-0519

Risk Management Resources

Phone: 501-664-7705
Fax: 501-664-4849

Linda Collins, COO
Phone: 501-614-1108

RMR Loss Control

Consultants:

Matt Bradshaw, Loss Control
Manager
Phone: 501-614-1165
Cell: 501-614-1465

Don Jack, Loss Control
Consultant
Phone: 501-614-1191
Cell: 501-454-7287

Rusty Freeman, Loss Control
Consultant
Phone: 501-614-1173

AHAWCSIT Claims Contacts:

Jill Johnson, Claims Director
Phone: 501-614-1112
Fax: 501-614-1412

Tonya Rodgers, Claims
Specialist
Phone: 501-614-1194
Fax: 501-614-1463

Medcor (Injury at work)

800-775-5866

Flu-free facts

Take these steps to fight the flu

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is encouraging employers and employees to maintain a healthy, flu-free workplace this season.

Here's what the agency recommends:

- **Get vaccinated.** Vaccination is the most important way to prevent the spread of the flu.
- **Stay home.** If you're sick, don't come to work. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that those who have a fever and respiratory symptoms stay home until 24 hours after their fever ends without the use of medication.
- **Wash your hands frequently.** Use soap and water and wash for a full 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Avoid touching the nose, mouth and eyes.**
- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue,** or cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve.
- **Keep frequently touched common surfaces like phones and computer equipment clean.**
- **Try not to use a coworker's phone, desk, office computer, or other work tools and equipment.** If you must, consider cleaning the device first with a disinfectant.

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Got News?

Do you have news that needs to be circulated or have a subject you would like for us to address? Let us know by emailing the newsletter editor at tcreel@arkhospitals.org.

AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust Program is administered by Risk Management Resources (RMR), a division of BancorpSouth Insurance Services, Inc. www.bxsi.com. In March 2003 the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust was established. The program provides workers' compensation coverage to AHA members.

Risk Management Resources, the administrator for the program, assists members in the areas of claims management, safety and loss control. Tina Creel, Vice President of AHA Services, Inc., is the Group Manager of the Trust and provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Trust.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the overall operation of the Group Trust.