FACT SHEET

Environment, Health and Safety Information for the Berkeley Campus

Office Safety

An office may seem like a harmless place to work, but it may contain potential hazards. Identifying the dangers and correcting the problems can help ensure a safe work environment.

General safety

Heavy Objects: Prevent back injuries by knowing how much you can lift safely and by getting help when needed. To learn more about safe lifting techniques, contact Health*Matters at 643-4646.

Unsafe Ladders: Never stand on a table, counter, or chair with wheels when reaching for items overhead. Always use a sturdy stool or stepladder.

Loose Electric Cords: Keep wiring organized and out of walking areas to prevent tripping. Don't put wiring under carpets. This conceals frayed cords and increases the risk of fires.

Slippery Floors: Clean up spills on the floor to prevent slipping. Use non-slip backing beneath throw rugs to avoid sliding.

File Cabinets: Don't place file cabinets where people are liable to walk into open drawers. Do not overload top drawers and create a top-heavy file cabinet that could topple. Keep files loosely packed to prevent hand and wrist injuries.

Broken Equipment: Do not use broken or unguarded equipment (such as a paper cutter without a guard). Mark the equipment "unsafe" and report it to your supervisor.

Unstable Furniture: Heavy equipment and furniture over 4 feet tall should be braced to prevent tipping and injuring anyone or blocking exits during an earthquake.

Fire safety

Propped-open fire doors: Do not prop open self-closing, fire-rated corridor doors. They can resist flames and keep smoke out of corridors only if they are kept closed.

Blocked Exits: Be sure you know the location of more than one emergency exit and that nothing blocks your egress.

Fire Equipment: Be aware of the location of the closest fire alarm and fire extinguisher. If employees are expected to use this equipment, contact EH&S at 642-3073 to arrange for fire extinguisher training.

Ergonomics

Workstation: If you work at a computer for four hours a day or more, have your computer workstation evaluated by your department's Computer Workstation Evaluator to help identify and correct ergonomic problems.

Video Display Terminals: VDT users are encouraged to have periodic eye examinations by their personal physician. While working, take a five-minute break away from your computer every half hour. Take standing breaks at least hourly when sitting in your office for prolonged periods.

For more detailed information about UC Berkeley's Ergonomics Program, visit the website at *www.uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/ergonomics/* or contact the Tang Center (642-8410 or *ergotf@uhs.berkeley.edu*).
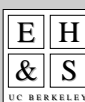
Electrical safety

Extension Cords: Extension cords should be used for temporary (less than 30 days) power only. To install permanent wiring, contact Physical Plant—Campus Services.

Multiple Power Strips: Do not use power strips in multiple, "daisy chain" combinations. Never plug a power strip into another power strip, or into an extension cord.

Electrical Outlets: Do not use three-prong to two-prong adapters. Find a three-prong outlet.

Waste disposal

Computer Monitors: Monitors are considered universal waste and cannot be disposed of in campus trash receptacles or dumpsters. Contact EH&S (642-3073) for information on UC Berkeley's program to collect and redistribute unwanted electronic equipment.

Toner: Empty toner containers may be thrown in the common trash, but it is better to send them back to your toner supplier for recycling. If you have an unwanted full container, you may not throw it in the trash. Please contact EH&S (642-3073) so that we can dispose of it as hazardous waste.

Batteries: Used batteries may not go in the common trash. EH&S will provide battery collection containers and will pick them up when full or at least yearly. Call 643-7195 to request containers and a recharge authorization if your department doesn't presently have an account with EH&S.

Household Chemicals: Empty household chemical containers (for example, for correction fluid or furniture polish) can be disposed of as common trash.

Aerosol Cans: Aerosol cans must be empty before disposal in the common trash.

Other chemicals: Other hazardous chemicals must be disposed of by EH&S(call 642-3073).

Injury & Illness Prevention Program (IIPP)

Your IIPP describes the safety program your department designed, including the structure of your department safety committee and other resources. You should receive documented training on your department's IIPP and know where it is kept.

- Find out who your Department Safety Coordinator (DSC) is and how you can contact the DSC if you have a specific safety question or concern.
- If you are injured in the workplace, immediately report the injury to your supervisor.
- Also report all unsafe conditions to your supervisor. Alternatively, you can use the Report of Unsafe Condition form, located on the web at *http://www.ehs.berkeley.edu/whatwedo/healthsafety/iipp/form1.html*. Submit it within your department in accordance with your IIPP.

Building Emergency Plan (BEP)

Your BEP describes evacuation procedures and other safety practices in your building. You should receive documented training on your department's BEP and know where it is kept.

- Find out who your Building Coordinator (BC) is and what that person's role is during an emergency.
- Learn what your personal role is during a building or campus emergency, and know the location of your building's Emergency Assembly Area (EAA).

Additional information on office safety can be found through the University Health Service's Health*Matters website at *http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/healthmatters/index.htm*, and on the EH&S web site at *http://www.ehs.berkeley.edu*.