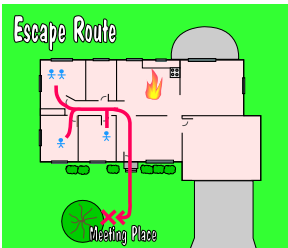


SAFETY WAVE



Fire Prevention Week

October 7-13, 2007 has been designated as Fire Prevention Week (FPW) within the USA. This year's theme is "Practice Your Escape Plan." Information on fire safety will be distributed through the Departmental Safety Representatives (DSRs) who will be meeting during the month of October 2007. Also, brochures and other material will be distributed on the Uptown, TUHSC, and TNPRC campuses through the OEHS staff members assigned to those locations. There will be displays set up for this purpose. A bit of history on FPW is that it was established to commemorate the Chicago Fire which occurred in 1871. This conflagration killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 persons without homes, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire burned for two days, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first proclamation for National Fire Prevention Day and since 1922, it has been observed during this period, according to the National Archives and Records Administration's Library Information Center.

National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) Survey

The Public Affairs Division of the NFPA commissioned Harris Interactive to conduct a Fire Prevention Survey in the Fall of 2004. This included a telephone survey of 1,014 adults living in private households in the continental USA. The detailed findings are as follows:

Virtually all Americans (96%) currently have a smoke alarm installed in their homes. Four out of ten have had their smoke alarms go off in the past twelve months. The majority (69%) report that their alarm went off because of smoke from cooking, an oven, stove, or toaster. Only 1% had their alarm go off from a fire. Fewer than one in ten thought that their smoke alarm going off meant that there was a fire or that they had to get out. Most think a smoke alarm should be replaced at least every five years.

Approximately two-thirds (66%) have an escape plan in case of a fire, but of those only 35% have practiced their plans. People under the age of 34 are less likely than those who are older to have escape plans.

Almost nine in ten think they have 30 minutes or less before a fire in their homes turns life-threatening. 75% think they have less than 10 minutes.

87% have never had a fire in their homes; of those who have, the most common causes were household appliances or cooking. In cases of a household fire, 56% reported that the fire department responded.

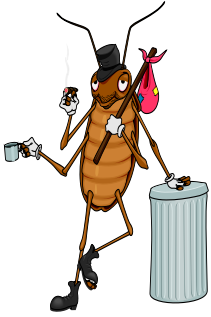
75% use candles in their home; most use them for their scent or for decorative reasons. Women are more likely to use candles than men as are those in households with two or more people. The most common use of candles is their scent. Candles are used most often in living rooms. They are also used in kitchens, bedrooms, and bathrooms.

Nearly half would install a sprinkler system if they were building a new home. Of those who would not, one-third say it is too expensive.

Tornadoes and fires are the disasters for which people think they are most at risk. Those with children feel they are more at risk for a fire than those without children. People feel they are prepared for a fire more than for other disasters. Men generally report feeling more prepared for disasters than women.

How do your responses rate in comparison to the survey?

Pest Control and Sanitation - What Can I Do?



All creatures require food, water, and shelter to survive. Pests, like mice and roaches, live in and around buildings where these needs are met. Pests can also spread disease, contaminate food, upset building occupants, and damage property.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) focuses on eliminating pests by minimizing their access to food, water, and hiding places in conjunction with proper pesticide use by licensed applicators. The most important thing building occupants can do to promote an effective IPM program is to observe good sanitation practices.

An effective IPM program must have the cooperation of all building occupants. Everyone should know basic concepts of integrated pest management and how they are utilized to control pest problems. Some areas that receive special attention due to the susceptibility for pest problems include food preparation and service areas, break rooms, refrigerators and microwave ovens, vending machines, custodial closets, trash cans and dumpsters.

Here are a few important pest control tips:

- * **Keep Pests out of Buildings:** Caulk or cement cracks and holes on the outside of the building. Install door sweeps and avoid propping doors open. Put screens on windows. Place trash cans and dumpsters away from doors.
- * **Remove Pests' Food & Water:** Good sanitation (especially in areas where food is prepared, stored, or eaten) is a great way to control pests. Store food in tightly sealed containers. Don't keep food items in desks and lockers. Clean up leftover food and spills immediately. Wrap or bag food waste before disposal. Periodically clean behind and under kitchen appliances. Make sure all garbage cans have tight fitting lids. Repair leaky pipes and remove standing water.
- * **Reduce Pests' Shelter:** A messy room provides many places for pests to hide. Get rid of clutter! Seal holes in the walls and cracks along baseboards. Use shelving that is easy to clean under.
- * **Report Pest Problems** to building manager.

The foundation of an effective pest management program is good sanitation. Poor sanitation in one area of a building can cause pest problems in adjacent areas. Trash disposal and sound structural maintenance also play important roles in an IPM program.

All building occupants should understand how their actions can increase or decrease pest problems. Through the use of these practices, pest problems can often be eliminated before they ever occur. An inhospitable environment is created for the pest by depriving it of food, water, and harborage needed for its survival.

Computer Recycling

If your office is moving or upgrading computers, please know that Tulane University computers and computer peripherals that are no longer in use can be recycled through the Property Management Office. The computers are logged out and are first made available to other Tulane offices. Computers that cannot be re-used by the University are recycled by the Capital Area Corporate Recycling Council, a Baton Rouge non-profit that distributes many to schools.

There are different computer recycling/moving procedures for the Uptown and Downtown campuses. You can find instructions through the <http://recycle.tulane.edu> website. If you have sensitive financial, patient records, or student records data on your computer, please contact the Tulane Help Desk at 862-8888 to schedule someone to remove the information from the computer before it is recycled.

Recycling your surplus computers and peripherals makes them available for another use, and it keeps potentially hazardous materials out of local landfills.

Contributors: James Balsamo, Jay Folse, Mitzi Hithe, Louis Mayer, Charles Reindl, Susan Welch

Recommendations for Laptop Workstations

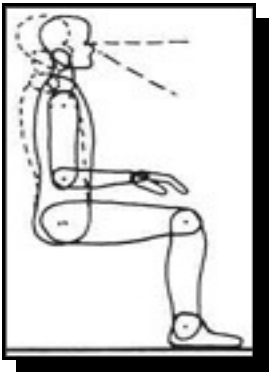
The **Centers for Disease Control** does not recommended laptops be used as a primary computer unless the user can maintain a neutral posture. Laptops have increasingly become the alternative to desktop computers at workstations. Laptop users who enjoy the convenience of this smaller, portable computer technology should be aware, however, that laptop design is not as yet ergonomically sound. The exchange for convenience can be poor neck/head, hand/wrist posture which may result in stress and/or injury to the body. The good news is that there are ways to compensate for these shortcomings and to provide a work environment that supports a neutral body posture that protects neck, back, wrist, and eyes from undue stress or strain. See OSHA's eTools at www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/positions.html for proper posture positions.

Workstations for Full-Time Laptop Users

Recommendations for setting up a workstation for a full-time laptop user are much the same as those for a desktop computer workstation and include most components of a workstation environment such as chair, monitor, keyboard, mouse, lighting, etc.

Chair

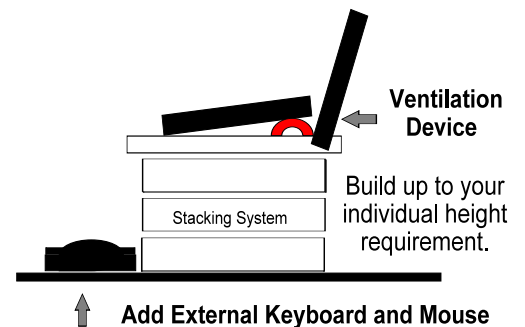
The "chair back" should provide lumbar support and should be fully adjustable to positions that support the lower back by following the natural curvature of the spine. The "chair seat" should be adjustable from a seated position and raised or lowered to achieve the proper position of arms and legs (see illustration, left). Armrest support is beneficial if an *exterior* keyboard is used. If the laptop keyboard is used, a chair *without* armrests provides more flexibility. Feet should be on the floor, or a foot rest should be used if seat adjustments make this impossible.



The Viewing Screen/Monitor

The viewing screen/monitor should be placed directly before the user. The viewing screen should be at or just below eye level, approximately 18" to 24" from user's face, and should be positioned to a 10 to 20 degree tilt back unless the angle causes glare. If glare is a problem, an anti-glare filter over the viewing screen can be helpful.

To obtain optimal viewing comfort and to reduce neck strain, consider using a desktop (stationary) monitor in place of the laptop screen. If you use the laptop screen, add a stand or stacking system to elevate the screen for optimal viewing. **Warning:** Because laptop bases get hot due to the batteries, make certain the platform surface on which the laptop sits has a ventilation system, or you may simply use something from your desk (pencil erasers for example) to elevate the back of the laptop, creating an air space (see illustration, above right). Finally, a document holder placed at the same distance and height as the viewing screen will also help reduce eye and neck strain.



Keyboard and Mouse

The laptop keyboard and screen create a *fixed design* that does not allow for separate adjustment: bringing the screen up to an optimal viewing height throws off proper keyboard placement, while proper placement of the keyboard throws off optimal screen height. Full-time laptop users especially should consider adding an external keyboard and mouse to their laptop stations to avoid injuries in the upper body extremities. Both items can be connected directly to the laptop or to a docking station or a mini hub. The keyboard should be positioned directly in front and close to your body to avoid over extended reaching. It should be placed approximately at elbow height so that your shoulders can relax and arms can rest at your sides. Arms should be at an 80° to 100° angle with the upper arm almost vertical. The mouse should be adjacent to the keyboard at the same height. The back of the wrist should be kept flat (in a neutral position) when using either the keyboard or the mouse.

Lighting

When lighting in the office is too bright for comfortable VDT screen viewing, you may consider lowering the general room lighting level and using a properly placed task light. Position the work area so that light sources such as windows are perpendicular to the monitor rather than directly behind or facing the monitor. If necessary, use shades or blinds to reduce the intensity of direct sunlight, and consider adding an anti-glare filter over the viewing screen.

In depth information on ergonomic computer workstation set up can be found at the OSHA website <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/index.html>, the Centers for Disease Control website <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ohs/Ergonomics/compergo.htm>, and the Cornell University website <http://www.ergo.human.cornell.edu/culaptoptips.html>.

Finding Material Safety Data Sheets for Your Chemicals

As required by the OSHA Laboratory Standard, Tulane has a written Chemical Hygiene Plan which can be found in Section 30 (Laboratory Safety) of Tulane University's Environmental Health & Safety Policies and Procedures Manual (see www2.som.tulane.edu/oehs/safety/30laboratory.pdf). A key requirement of both the Hazard Communication Standard for non-lab areas and the Chemical Hygiene Plan for laboratories is that chemical safety information such as that found on Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) be available for personnel while they are in their work area.

Most MSDSs can be obtained from the OEHS website by selecting the "Material Safety Data Sheets" link www.som.tulane.edu/oehs/msds.htm). The site provides direct access to several MSDS databases, including the HazSoft Database, which can search for products by chemical name, company name, company catalog number, or Chemical Abstract (CAS) number.

A more recent addition to the OEHS website for facilitating MSDS searches is listed on the website as "MSDS Web Links" (see http://www.som.tulane.edu/oehs/docs/chemical_safety/weblinks.pdf). The user may click on this to access a Microsoft Word table which contains well over 200 company names and hyper-links to company websites to obtain MSDSs directly. This table also provides simple instructions for each website where needed to further facilitate user access to these MSDSs. OEHS continually makes additions and changes to this table as more companies provide direct links to their MSDS databases.

Laboratory personnel are encouraged to access the OEHS website in order to obtain Material Safety Data Sheets and information for all chemicals in their labs. If an MSDS cannot be located, OEHS may be contacted directly by calling Jay Folse, Chemical Safety Specialist, at (504) 988-2879 or Pam Fatland, Manager Chemical Safety, at (504) 988-2800.

Radioactive/Hazardous Waste Room Is Back In Business

The radioactive and hazardous waste room at the downtown campus which was flooded during Hurricane Katrina has been repaired and is now open again. It is located in Room 1105 of the Tulane Medical School Building and is open Tuesday mornings from 8:30 to 10:30, or by contacting Bruce McClue (bmccclue@tulane.edu) or Charles Reindl (creindl@tulane.edu). Tags and labels for your wastes are available in the entrance area. Please remember that radioactive waste must be labeled with isotope, activity amount in uCi or mCi, date, and name of the principal investigator. Hazardous waste must be labeled with the full name of the material and the associated hazards (such as corrosive or flammable). If further information is needed, call Charles Reindl at (504)988-2867 or Bruce McClue at (504)988-2865.



Fire Prevention

Coastal Training Technology, Inc. recently sent out an email that contained this statement:

There's some good news about fires in the workplace - even though there are 70,000-80,000 workplace fires in the U.S. annually, only 15% result from a catastrophic failure of equipment. Meaning, 85% of fires are caused by factors related to human behavior and are totally preventable with the proper proactive fire prevention plan in place.

Do you know what fire hazards are in your work area? Do you know how to sound the fire alarm in your building? Do you even know what the fire alarm sounds like? Do you know where the nearest fire extinguisher is located? Do you know how to safely exit your building even if the normal and customary exit is unavailable?

If you cannot answer yes to these questions, then you had better take the time to find out the answers. Your life may depend on it!!

Environmental Health & Safety

Pam Fatland, Editor

Tulane University TW16

1430 Tulane Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70112-2699

Phone (504) 988-5486 Uptown (504) 865-5307

FAX (504) 988-1693

Web site www.som.tulane.edu/oehs

Tulane University

Office of Environmental Health & Safety - TW16

Tulane University

1430 Tulane Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70112-2699