



The Safety Zone

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

Spring cleaning

Spruce up your work space, too

For those who live in colder climates, spring cleaning is an annual ritual that coincides with warmer weather and the ability to open up homes that were tightly battened down against the winter's chill. The idea of an annual cleaning binge is useful in the workplace, too.

Decluttering in the workplace, for example, is not just an aesthetic pursuit, it also improves safety. Spring cleaning is the perfect time to dispose of:

- **Chemicals.** Dispose of chemicals that are no longer in use, have passed their use-by dates and have missing or illegible labels. Dispose of chemicals properly: Some can be poured down the drain, but others might need to be disposed of as hazardous waste.
- **Trash.** Anything that's not in use that has piled up should be removed. This cleanup can reduce fire hazards, tripping hazards and pest harborages.

Spring cleaning can also address infrequent needs, such as office equipment and services. University of Arizona researchers famously found that office phones, computer keyboards and mice, and desktops harbored 400 times more infectious bacteria than office toilet seats. Yet, in most offices, vacuuming and emptying the trash are the only regular cleaning performed.



So, use disinfecting wipes on office surfaces, not just once a year but daily, if possible, to reduce infectious illness transmission in the workplace.

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news & notes

Computer Safety Checklist

Prevent Neck and Back Strain and Pain:

- Organize workstation so everything's within comfortable reach
- Allow enough room under desktop to move legs
- Position screen 18 to 24 inches from face
- Set up screen and document holder just below eye level and close enough together to avoid looking back and forth
- Angle screen so you don't have to strain to read it
- Place keyboard so all the keys are easy to reach
- Use a chair with fairly flat seat and an adjustable backrest that supports the lower back
- Adjust chair height so feet rest on floor or footrest
- Sit with back straight, head level and feet flat on floor or footrest
- Work with head straight, eyes parallel to the screen
- Shift positions regularly without leaving chair

Prevent Carpal Tunnel Syndrome:

- Keep hands, wrists and forearms straight and parallel to floor while working, with elbows at 90 degree angle
- Take breaks periodically to stretch, shake out hands
- Recognize symptoms (pain, numbness, tingly sensation)
- Report symptoms immediately

Prevent Stress

- Follow procedures to reduce neck and back pain
- Don't rush
- Don't become angry or frustrated with a computer



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AHAWCSIT



Alcohol Awareness Month

What you need to know

Sponsored by the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence, Inc. (ncadd.org), Alcohol Awareness Month is a good time for a gentle reminder about this often destructive and sometimes deadly disease. Here are possible signs of alcohol abuse:

- Poor concentration and coordination
- Slow mental and physical reflexes
- Letting responsibilities slide
- Impaired judgment or decision making
- Forgetfulness and carelessness
- Mood swings
- Blackouts
- Loud, aggressive, or violent behavior after drinking

Other symptoms include:

- Drinking alone or to get drunk
- Arguing with others about drinking
- Drinking in the morning, before work, or before driving
- Drinking to solve problems
- Using alcohol as medication
- Avoiding friends or family while drinking

Check out your company's employee assistance program, Alcoholics Anonymous (www.aa.org), or www.AlcoholAbuse.com for more information and assistance

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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.

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