



The Safety Zone

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

news & notes

AFTER THE FLOOD

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) urges everyone engaged in clean-up after floods - employers, workers and the public - to avoid potential hazards and take steps to protect themselves.

“People must be aware of possible hazards - from chemically contaminated water to unstable structures - created in the aftermath of the disaster,” said John Hermanson, OSHA’s regional administrator in Dallas. “Everyone involved in the cleanup needs personal protective equipment and proper training to prevent injury and illness. The safety and health of the public is a priority.”

Before entering buildings or structures after a flood, an assessment of the potential hazards and exposure must be done. Using that information, an employer must ensure that workers, at a minimum, are provided with education on the hazards they face and how to protect themselves.



Flood cleanup safety

What you need to know

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the nature of flood cleanups varies by location. While a flooded residential home may not present the obvious hazards that a commercial property with stored hazardous chemicals would, each situation has its own challenges.

Homeowners, for example, should be aware that damaged structures may be at risk of collapse, and the onset of mold may have already begun. Workplaces may have these same dangers, in addition to many other serious safety threats, including chemical exposure.

Employers should evaluate chemical workplace hazards and create a chemical inventory, which is part of a workplace hazard communication program.

In either situation, homeowners and employers should request the assistance of a safety and health professional.

People involved in flood cleanup should take the following precautions:

Use appropriate personal protective equipment. Wear a hard hat, safety glasses, reflective vest, gloves, and steel-toed work boots.

Stay dry in wet environments by wearing waterproof gloves and boots.

Breathe safely and use respiratory protection, especially where dust and mold exist.

Avoid dangerous falls and use fall protection when working more than 6 feet off the ground.

Protect your hearing. In loud and noisy environments, hearing protection is important.

Work cleanly. Stop the spread of contaminants and disease with proper hygiene and sanitation.

Wash your hands regularly. Where suitable facilities are absent, use hand sanitizer.



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AHAWCSIT



What makes you happy at work?

Take steps to improve your well-being

An OfficeTeam survey showed that employees value their friends at work more than anything else - well, except for a paycheck. Other things that made workers happy were benefits, an easy commute, challenging assignments, and a supportive manager.

OfficeTeam highlights five small shifts you can make to be happier at work:

1. **Socialize with coworkers.** Participate in activities like team lunches or birthday celebrations. Getting to know colleagues builds camaraderie and makes working together more fun and productive.
2. **Step away from the desk.** Clear your mind by taking short walks or, weather permitting, enjoying lunch outdoors. Use allotted vacation days so you get adequate time away from work.
3. **Explore flexible scheduling options.** Find out if your employer supports alternative work arrangements. You may be able to reduce your commute by working from home on certain days or modifying your hours.
4. **Take advantage of perks.** Make use of benefits beyond health insurance and vacation time, such as on-site exercise facilities, discount programs, or dry cleaning services.
5. **Set goals and meet them.** Work toward career objectives by volunteering for stretch assignments outside your normal responsibilities. Build new skills through professional development programs.

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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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