



Office Safety. What is the risk?

The article title is a great question when working on a college campus or administrative office, what are the risks? The reality, based on claims statistics, is accidents/injuries occurred more frequent than one would think. Injuries to administrative/clerical staff occur every day. The type of incidents range from getting a foot caught on computer cables underneath the desk, objects falling on the head from haphazard storage to tripping over objects in the walkway or aisle. Other incidents like hitting your head on an open file cabinet door, falling back on a chair, or back strain from reaching while sitting on a chair to pick something up that fell to the floor. All of these incidents have been highlighted on an injury report form.



Use a rolling chair to carry heavy box.

To prevent injuries to you or others in the office, the following are the top ten safety tips that one should consider in avoiding an injury:

1. Keep all computer cables, electrical cords off the floor or underneath the desk. Use cable trays, binding wire or out of the way placement to avoid tripping.
2. Do not lean back in four-legged or wheeled chairs.
3. Keep walking/working areas free from trip hazards, clutter, cords/cables, storage boxes, loose paper or file.
4. Do not leave file cabinets open or allowed for more than one drawer open at a time. Use handles to shut file cabinets, avoid slamming drawer when closing.
5. Use proper lifting techniques when moving office equipment, files/boxes. Whenever, possible use hand-carts to carry objects distances outside the office area.

6. When storing materials on shelves, avoid stacking materials on top of bookcase or file cabinets. Do not store loose objects or items on top of stored items.
7. Do not lean over in chair while seated to pick up dropped items. Get out of chair and bend from the knees or squat down to pick the object up.
8. Do not use chair, furniture, or boxes for support or to stand on while reaching for objects. Take the time to get a ladder or step stool to properly reach these objects.
9. Do not leave open scissors, box cutters, razor blades, or sharp objects lying around or loose in a drawer. Cover and use trays to arrange and store properly.
10. Office furniture, work station layout, computer, chair must be set up and adjusted to allow for an ergonomic adjusted fit to avoid unnecessary stress to arms, wrist/hands, shoulders or back. Contact your supervisor for proper assessment.



Above are POOR storage practices: storing loose objects on shelf; using top shelf for heavy storage boxes.



Do NOT bend over while sitting down to pick up something. Get out of chair and use proper lifting techniques.

In closing, failures to follow any one of the top ten preventative steps have led to a person getting injured. It is in your best interest to use these preventative steps to avoid becoming an accident victim.