



Safety News

ISSUE TWO, 2007

STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND

Optimize Worker Safety Outdoors

Working outdoors in the sun and around reflective or hot surfaces and equipment puts workers at risk for overexposure to the sun. Shield the skin from harmful, cancer-causing ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun by wearing lightweight clothing that covers the skin, including a wide-brimmed hat that covers the head, neck, and ears, a long-sleeved shirt, and long pants. And, protect the eyes with UV-absorbent sunglasses.

Fifteen minutes before going outdoors, apply a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher, reapplied periodically and waterproofed if around water or actively perspiring.

Stay hydrated in hot working environments. The body is designed to cool itself by sweating water from its internal system to the skin surface. If more water is removed from the system than is replaced, it could result in heat illness and sometimes even death. When working in hot conditions, drink plenty of water before, during, and after work. The general recommendation is to drink at least one cup of water every 20 minutes.

Watch out for snakes and other biting critters like bees, wasps, spiders, ticks, etc. Immediate attention is required for bitten workers who experience

nausea, dizziness, hives, stomach cramps or severe swelling. Wear high-top heavy boots, gloves, and clothes that cover exposed skin areas. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots. Apply insect repellent containing DEET and avoid cologne, aftershave or perfumed soaps. Watch where you put your hands, where you step, and where

you sit, so as not to accidentally disturb a critter's nest or hiding place.

Exposure to certain outdoor plants, such as poison oak, can cause a mild to severe reaction. Certain times of year, even the bare wood or roots

can cause a reaction. The best way to deal with nuisance plants is to learn to recognize them and, where possible, avoid them. Protect against skin exposure by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants tied around the ankles, leather gloves with gauntlets, and a wide-brimmed hat and neck scarf. Don't touch any skin, clothing, tools or animals that have come into contact with the plant. And after any outdoor work, shower with a strong soap and wash all clothing in detergent.

You can safely enjoy your work outdoors as long as you dress appropriately for the working conditions and take proper precautions against the possible hazards of the working environment. □



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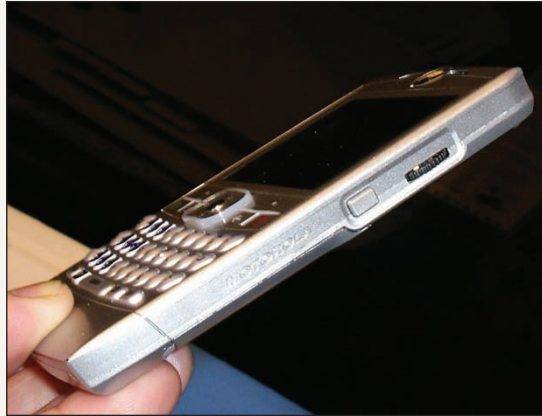
The Expert's Corner

PDA's – Boon To Business Or Doomed To Disability?

Personal Digital Assistants or PDAs are handheld devices, such as the BlackBerry™ and Treo™ (called Smartphones), which allow the user to access e-mail and be “on-call” 24/7 with family, friends, and work. Unfortunately, they’ve also earned the name “CrackBerry” because of their addictive nature.

PDAs are typically grasped on each side by the four fingers and rested on the fatty-pad at the base of the thumb of each hand, thus forcing the thumb to do the majority of the typing on the QWERTY-style keyboard – a design and configuration that’s been around since being patented in 1878. Those who use a PDA for more than a quick check/response to e-mails (frequency) and for long periods of time (duration) increase the likelihood of debilitating injuries (especially to the thumb) and the possible aggravation of arthritis, tenosynovitis (inflammation of the sheath around a tendon) and/or thumb extensor tendonitis called deQuervain’s Disease. A term used to describe these maladies is called “BlackBerry Thumb” because the thumb is not designed for the repetitive

movements involved in typing, especially isolated movements as are used with these devices.



From the American Physical Therapist Association, here are some tips to help avoid “BlackBerry Thumb”:

Take frequent breaks This will help the neck posture also, which is forced into extreme neck flexion to view the device.

Develop “AutoText” shortcuts for most commonly used phrases unique to your business, friends, and family.

Try to avoid thumb-typing Use your other fingers to type.

Stretch out those overworked hands, fingers, and especially the thumb. Each stretch should be held for ten seconds and repeated eight times:

Finger Fans Open up your hand, spreading your fingers as far apart as possible.

Fold your hands together, rotate your palms away from your body as you extend your arms out in front of you.

Repeat the stretch above, extending your arms overhead this time.

Another resource with information on stretching is Stretches for Office Workers (SCIF #17126), a State Fund publication, available through your Loss Control Consultant or by calling your local district office.

R.J. Banks, MS, CIE is the Senior Ergonomist for State Compensation Insurance Fund. □

Safe Jobs For Youth Month

Governor Schwarzenegger declared May as “Safe Jobs for Youth Month” to remind parents, teens, and employers that they must pay special attention to the safety of teens entering the workforce. If you hire teens, you should be aware of certain regulatory requirements for employers. More employer information and resources are posted on scif.com under the link: “young workers safety information”.

Key restrictions in the **California Labor Code** for workers under age 18 are listed below.

This list is not complete, but covers the most common and important restrictions.

In California no worker under 18 may

- Drive a motor vehicle on public streets as part of the job, or work as an outside helper on a motor vehicle
- Operate power-driven machinery, including meat slicers, box crushers, forklifts, and circular saws
- Handle, serve, or sell alcoholic beverages
- Work in wrecking, demolition, or roofing

Also, no one under 16 may

- Work in building or construction
- Work in manufacturing or food processing
- Do baking or cooking on the job (except at a serving counter)
- Work on a ladder or scaffold
- Load or unload trucks
- Dispense gas or oil
- Clean, wash, or polish cars

Continued on next page

All Employers Are Required To Have An IIPP

All California employers are required by Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations' Section 3203 to "establish, implement, and maintain an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program" (IIPP). Employers with 10 or more employees must have the IIPP in writing but employers with fewer than 10 employees may communicate to and instruct employees orally in general safe work practices with specific instructions on hazards unique to the employees' job assignments.

The law requires employers to have more than just a written program on a bookcase, it must be an active, living program explained to and understood by all workers. At minimum, the IIPP should contain the following elements:

- Identify who has the responsibility and authority to implement the IIPP
- A system for ensuring that employees comply with safe and healthy work practices
- A system for communicating with employees on matters that could affect their safety and health, along with how employees can inform management of workplace hazards without fear of reprisal

- Procedures for identifying and evaluating workplace hazards including scheduled inspections
- Procedures for investigating any occupational injury or illness
- Methods for timely correction of unsafe or unhealthy conditions
- How and when training and instruction will be provided

Make sure to keep records of all activities related to the program including any documentation.

As a service to its policyholders, State Fund has produced a model IIPP – accessible on its website at www.scif.com – that can be individualized by a company or type of business. The downloadable program contains documentation forms (many in Spanish) designed to meet the law's requirements.

A well-developed and used IIPP is a way for employers to fulfill their responsibility to provide a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. Employers who don't follow the law expose themselves to penalties and a Cal/OSHA violation could lead to criminal prosecution, if an employee is injured or becomes ill from a known but concealed danger on the job. □

Continued from previous page

Work hours: ages 14 and 15

- 7 am–7 pm, from Labor Day–June 1
- Not during school hours
- 7 am–9 pm, from June 1–Labor Day

Maximum hours when school is in session 18 hours a week, but not over

- 3 hours a day on school days
- 8 hours a day Saturday–Sunday and holidays

Maximum hours when school is not in session

- 40 hours a week
- 8 hours a day

Work hours: ages 16 and 17

- 5 am–10 pm when there is school the next day

- 5 am–12:30 am when there is no school the next day

Maximum hours when school is in session 48 hours a week, but not over

- 4 hours a day Monday–Thursday
- 8 hours a day Friday–Sunday and holidays

Maximum hours when school is not in session

- 48 hours a week
- 8 hours a day

With certain exceptions, youth under 18 who take a job must have a **work permit** issued by the school district. Applications are available from their school site or from the main district office. □

Introducing... State Fund's Back Connection™



State Fund is proud to announce the release of another in the line of quality safety and health products for our policyholders.

State Fund's Back Connection™ is an innovative back injury prevention process packed into one informative DVD. Included on this DVD are interactive risk assessment and problem solving tools, videos to guide you through the process and assist with training, cost benefit tools, information on medical cost containment, documentation forms, success stories, resources, and much more. It's everything you need to help reduce back injuries at your work place.

We know that back injuries are prevalent in all work places; we also know that training alone is not an effective way to prevent back injuries. While other programs sit on the shelf unused, this engaging and innovative tool will help facilitate a back injury prevention process that works. State Fund's Back Connection™ will give you a lift to start, maintain, and evaluate your back injury prevention process.

The DVD is available on a fee-for-service basis only with a four hour minimum charge that includes delivery and time to train the user. Contact your local State Contract office and get connected today! □

Safety Topic

Safety News

State Compensation Insurance Fund

Issue Two, 2007



Emergency Wash Stations

Emergency wash fixtures must be provided in the workplace if there is a reasonable risk that workers may be exposed to caustic chemicals or other hazardous substances. All workers at risk for exposure should be made aware of the location and purpose of the emergency wash stations and receive regular training on their use. Keep in mind that emergency wash fixtures are not substitutes for personal protective gear like safety eyewear, face shields, and protective clothing.

Some chemicals have a harmful reaction when mixed with another substance and may endanger the handler or those in the area. You can

counteract a reaction by having emergency wash stations or showers that provide large amounts of continually flowing water to flush the chemical. It is not recommended that neutralizing agents be used on the eyes or skin. Combining certain chemicals can be dangerous, and may increase the damaging effects of chemical burns or develop scar tissue if the wrong neutralizing agent is accidentally used.

The most effective first step in treating chemical contamination of the eye or skin is immediate flushing or washing with potable water. This and the selection and placement of emergency wash stations or showers, are among the most crucial steps

you can take in effective emergency response.

Medical experts say that immediate access to an emergency wash station is critical. The chance of full recovery from chemical contamination of the eye is excellent, if the victim reaches an eyewash station within 10 to 15 seconds. Cal/OSHA requires 10 seconds or less. Panic, pain,

and obscured vision will slow response time, so it is important that emergency wash fixtures be highly visible.

The length of time and amount of flushing or washing is key to the successful treatment of the eye or skin. The minimum amount

of time for flushing the eye is 15 minutes, although most medical experts say a full 20 to 30 minutes of flushing time is best. It is important that the water pressure of the eyewash station be closely regulated because tender eye tissue can be easily damaged.

With the help of a trained medical professional, establish first-aid procedures for chemical injuries then review and update these measures and all safety precautions on a regular schedule. □



TOPIC REVIEW

Instructor _____

Date _____

Location _____

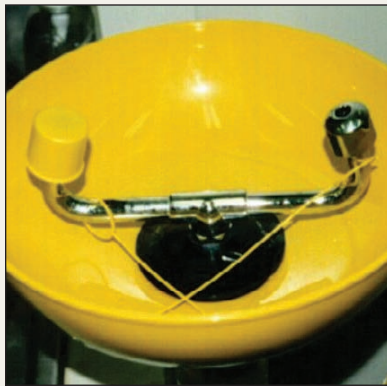
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Safety Recommendations



Estaciones de lavado de emergencia

El lugar de trabajo debe poseer estaciones de lavado de emergencia siempre que exista un riesgo razonable de que los trabajadores puedan verse expuestos a productos químicos cáusticos o a otras sustancias peligrosas. Todos los trabajadores sometidos a este riesgo deben conocer la ubicación y propósito de las estaciones de lavado de emergencia y ser capacitados con regularidad acerca de su uso. Adviértase que las estaciones de lavado de emergencia no son sustitutivas de los equipos de protección personal, tales como anteojos, máscaras protectoras y ropa de seguridad.



Algunos productos químicos reaccionan de una manera peligrosa cuando se mezclan con otra sustancia y pueden poner en peligro al usuario o a las personas a su alrededor. Se puede combatir la reacción si se dispone de duchas o estaciones de lavado de emergencia que proporcionen cantidades abundantes de agua que fluyan continuamente para eliminar el producto químico. No se recomienda el uso de agentes neutralizadores en los ojos ni en la piel. La combinación de ciertos productos químicos puede resultar peligrosa e incrementar los efectos perjudiciales de las quemaduras químicas o causar cicatrices en la piel si, accidentalmente, se utiliza un agente neutralizador inadecuado.

Lavarse de inmediato con abundante agua potable es la medida más efectiva que se puede tomar en primer lugar para el tratamiento de la contaminación química de los ojos o la piel.

Esto, junto con la selección y colocación de duchas o estaciones de lavado de emergencia, son dos de las medidas cruciales que se pueden adoptar para responder eficazmente a una emergencia.

Los expertos médicos destacan la extrema importancia del acceso inmediato a una estación de lavado de emergencia. La probabilidad de lograr una recuperación total de las lesiones oculares es excelente si la víctima llega a una estación de lavado de los ojos en un plazo de 10 a 15 segundos. Cal/OSHA exige un máximo de 10 segundos. El pánico, el dolor y el oscurecimiento de la visión reducirán el tiempo de respuesta, por lo que es importante que las estaciones de emergencia se coloquen en lugares bien visibles.

La duración del lavado y la cantidad de agua utilizada en él resultan fundamentales para el tratamiento con éxito de los ojos o la piel. La duración mínima del lavado de los ojos es de 15 minutos, aunque la mayoría de los expertos coincide en señalar que resulta más apropiado hacerlo durante 20 a 30 minutos. Es importante regular atentamente la presión del agua de la estación de lavado de los ojos, ya que el tejido ocular debilitado puede resultar dañado fácilmente.

Se deben establecer, con la ayuda de profesionales médicos capacitados, medidas de primeros auxilios para las lesiones químicas; éstas, al igual que todas las precauciones de seguridad, deben ser revisadas y actualizadas con regularidad. □

REVISIÓN DEL TEMA

Instructor _____

Fecha _____

Ubicación _____

Asistente(s) _____

Recomendaciones de seguridad





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News about Occupational Safety and Health in State Contract Agencies

Issue Two, 2007

Employer Education Series

State Fund continues to promote community educational outreach by increasing the quantity and frequency of employer seminars. These seminars are produced and sponsored by State Fund and are open to State Fund policyholders. The seminar topics cover all aspects of worker's compensation and are offered statewide.

As part of State Fund's Employer Education Series, the local State Fund Loss Control departments offer safety seminars dedicated to loss prevention. They feature safety training targeted to specific industries and safety topics of interest to California employers. Various programs in the series are developed in conjunction with State Fund insured Group Programs and external affiliates and partners. Some of these partners are occupational safety and health providers such as Cal/OSHA Consultation Service, the Department of Health Services, and the University of California.

The program venues provide the opportunity for attendees to have their workplace safety questions immediately and personally answered by industry experts. The typically half-day seminars are usually held at regional State Fund offices. To learn what programs are scheduled in your area, visit www.scif.com and click on Seminars. Sample topics planned for the series include:

- Heat Illness Prevention
- Contractor Beware: Safety Around Overhead And Underground Gas And Electric Lines
- Safety Communication

The goal of State Fund's Employer Education Series is to present valuable information from recognized safety and health experts to enable employers to reduce the frequency and severity of workplace injuries, facilitate regulatory compliance, and increase business profits. □

Reporting Work-Related Injuries

State Fund's Claims Reporting Center (1-888-222-3211) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for policyholders to report injuries as soon as they occur. Agents will do the necessary paperwork to get the claim started and refer the injured to the designated physician or provider.

Within 8 hours of any serious illness or injury (requiring hospitalization over 24 hours, other than for medical observation or where there is permanent employee disfigurement) or death occurring in the workplace or in connection with employment, employers must report the incident to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. □

This State Contract Agencies Safety News is produced by the Safety and Health Services Department of State Fund to assist clients in their loss control efforts. Information or recommendations contained in this publication were obtained from sources believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is only advisory and does not presume to be exhaustive or inclusive of all workplace hazards or situations. Permission to reprint articles subject to approval by State Compensation Insurance Fund.

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