

Often times the hazards and injuries experienced in an office environment mirror those that are seen in an industrial environment. Some of the most prevalent issues typically seen in office environments include: slips, trips and falls, storage of materials, electrical problems, and lifting that may cause strains and sprains. Associates can help minimize the risk of these hazards by being aware of some of the most common at risk situations they cause and the appropriate corrective actions associated with each.

## Slips, Trips, and Falls

**Watch for cords and cables!** These can create a trip hazard when placed in traffic areas. When practical, use cord covers/organizers to reduce the trip hazard.

**Clean up spills immediately!** If a spill cannot be cleaned up immediately, arrange a barricade or warning sign identifying the hazard.

**Don't use makeshift ladders or scaffold (desks, file cabinets)!** Take the time to find the right "tool for the job", either a step ladder or stool to reach overhead.



## Storage of Materials



- Do not block exits, fire doors, aisles, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, electrical panels, or traffic lanes.
- Store sharp objects like scissors and letter openers separate from other office supplies at your desk to reduce the likelihood of cut and puncture injuries.
- Load cabinets from the bottom to the top to reduce the likelihood of the cabinet becoming top-heavy and toppling over.
- Remain diligent with housekeeping efforts. Make a point to store boxes, briefcases, purses and other personal items in an area that will not lead to a trip or fall.

## Strains and Sprains

- Safe lifting involves positioning yourself as close to the object as possible, bending your knees and keeping your back straight, and holding the object as close to your body as possible. Utilize team lifting when an object is too heavy for you to handle alone.
- To avoid pain associated with over use and static postures typically associated with work at a computer workstation, take frequent breaks to stretch or take a quick walk around the office.
- Create work zones at your desk to help reduce injuries associated with repeated use. Frequently used items should be within the primary work zone (~15" semicircle) and occasionally used items should be within the secondary work zone (~24" semicircle.)

