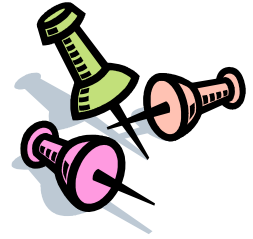




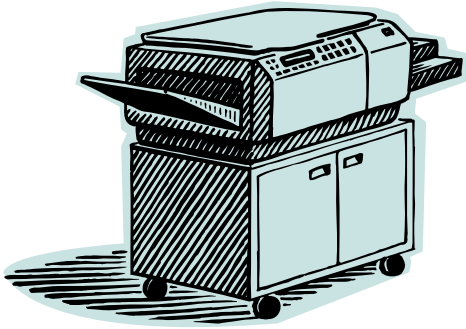
Safety Note

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



Safety Note #37

GENERAL OFFICE SAFETY



Information available from the Consumer Product Safety Commission indicates more than 15,000 people were treated in hospitals for office injuries during 2003. Typical office injuries include strains to backs and shoulders, repetitive motion impairments to joints, and lacerations and contusions to fingers and hands. Other office injuries result from trips and falls, poor lifting mechanics and overextending lifting capacity, bumping into objects, and electrical shocks. **Video E-013 Office Safety is available from the ANR Environmental Health and Safety Library at <http://safety.ucanr.org>.**

Recommended Safe Office Practices

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in office business machine operator's manuals with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Use proper lifting techniques when moving office objects. See Safety Note #10 Safe Lifting Practices for further information about correct lifting techniques.
- After use, always close desk and file drawers to prevent bumping injuries.
- Keep hallways and aisles unobstructed to prevent trip and fall injuries.
- Do not use damaged electrical cords/plugs/receptacles. Report them to your supervisor.
- Arrange computer workstations to reduce the potential for repetitive motion injuries. See Safety Note #28 Computer Workstations for additional information about enhancing work area ergonomics.
- When fixing paper jams in photocopiers or facsimile machines follow the manufacturer's instructions printed on panels and levers. Avoid touching surfaces that are labeled with "Caution Hot" signs.
- Do not block fire extinguishers, exit doors, or sprinkler heads.
- Store heavy office items and supplies on lower shelves.
- When working with office equipment pay attention to the task you are performing.
- Use extra caution when using a paper cutter or feeding paper into an automatic paper shredder.
- Do not overreach, use a step stool or ladder to reach elevated items.
- California regulations require bookshelves to be anchored to walls.
- Never run extension or electrical cords under carpeting.
- Always disconnect electrical cords from receptacles by pulling on the plug.
- Promptly clean up spills, particularly fluid spills on tile, sealed concrete, or hardwood floors.
- Do not store items on top of bookshelves or file cabinets.
- Become familiar with your work area and be aware of any workplace hazards.
- California regulations require employees to be trained on building evacuation and fire prevention plans.
- Always practice good housekeeping in offices.