



SAFETY MATTERS

A Newsletter of the Hamilton County
Department of Facilities



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news & notes

Safety Committee Meeting

The next Safety Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, August 8, 2013 at 9:00am in the Safety & Security Office, Room 628, Courthouse. The Committee meets monthly on the first or second Thursday of each month.

Fire Evacuation Drills

Fire evacuation drills were conducted at the County Administration Building (138 E. Court Street) and the Taft Law Center (230 E. Ninth Street) during the week of July 22nd. Both drills including evacuation and building re-entry proceeded in an orderly fashion. Further, we set new records for evacuation times in each building with each building being completely evacuated in less than 6 minutes!

Monthly Safety Training

This month's safety training topic will be Hazard Communication. This training will be significant because of the recent update to OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard which brings the U.S. in line with the "Globally Harmonized System of Classifying and Labeling Hazardous Chemicals (GHS)." See page 2 for more information on GHS.

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Practice Safe Driving

You are the County's most valuable asset! And the way that you drive says a lot about you and how the public may perceive the County. Please make a positive statement by following these work-related safe driving practices.

Stay Safe

- Use a seat belt at all times – driver and passenger(s).
- Be well-rested before driving.
- Avoid taking medications that make you drowsy.
- Set a realistic goal for the number of miles that you can drive safely each day.
- If you are impaired by alcohol or any drug, do not drive.

Stay Focused

- Driving requires your full attention. Avoid distractions such as adjusting the radio or other controls, eating or drinking, and talking on a cell phone.
- Drive defensively. Be alert to situations requiring quick action.
- Do not wear earphones while driving!



Avoid Aggressive Driving

- Keep your cool in traffic!
- Be patient and courteous to other drivers.
- Do not take other drivers' actions personally.
- Reduce your stress by planning your route ahead of time (bring the maps and directions), allowing plenty of travel time, and avoiding crowded roadways and busy driving times.

We're having a heat wave

Prevent heat illness

Thousands of workers become sick from exposure to heat every year, and some die. The good news is that with the proper preparation and training, illnesses and deaths can be prevented. The three key words are **water, rest, and shade**. Understand that drinking water often, taking breaks, and limiting time in the heat and sun can prevent heat illness. Make sure to build up gradually to heavy work in hot conditions so you become acclimated. During the first week of working in hot temperatures, gradually increase workloads, and take more frequent breaks.

Know these symptoms of and procedures to treat heat-related illness:

- **Heat exhaustion**—wet skin, headache, weakness and dizziness, nausea and vomiting, and sometimes cramps. Move the worker to a cool environment, remove or loosen clothing, and increase fluids.
- **Heatstroke**—characterized by an absence of sweating and extremely high body temperature, confusion, loss of consciousness, and/or convulsions. Reduce the body's temperature as quickly as possible with cool water or a sponge bath, and fan the body surface. Contact a physician immediately.

Heat Risk Factors

Safety and health experts say there are several factors that increase the risk of heat stress on really hot days, including:

- **Your physical condition**—If you're out of shape, you may be more affected by heat.
- **The kind of work you're doing**—Doing heavy physical work, working around heat-producing equipment, or working out in the sun can put you in danger faster.
- **Heavy protective clothing** that traps body heat
- **Some medications** that can interfere with the body's cooling system
- **Your age**—Older people have less body water and lower sweat gland efficiency.
- **Drinking a lot of caffeine**
- **Not drinking enough water**
- **Not taking enough time to get used to the heat** slowly and build up endurance

Some risk factors you might not be able to change. But there are things you *can* do.

- **Drink water** steadily on hot days. Drink at least 16 ounces before physical exertion and 5 to 7 ounces every 15 or 20 minutes while physically active. Even if you're just sitting, drink plenty of water.
- **Wear light, loose clothing** and a hat.
- **Work at a steady pace** and try not to overexert.
- **Take breaks** in a cool place.

Hazard Communication Standard Update

OSHA has updated the Hazard Communication Standard to include the Globally Harmonized System (GHS). This will require that all containers of hazardous chemicals be labeled with GHS-compliant labeling. Part of that label may be pictograms - a black symbol inside of a red diamond border. Each pictogram has a specific meaning to convey health, physical, and environmental hazard information for a chemical's hazard class and category. OSHA requires the use of nine different pictograms. Since you will be working with these labels, it's important that you become familiar with the pictograms.

GHS Symbols

Flame Over Circle represents oxidizers.



Flame represents flammables, self-reactives, pyrophorics, self-heating materials, substances that emit flammable gas, and/or type B, C, D, and F organic peroxides.



Exploding Bomb is used to represent explosives, self-reactives, and type A and B organic peroxides.



Skull and Crossbones represent acutely toxic materials.



Corrosion represents skin corrosives, eye corrosives, and materials corrosive to metals.



Gas Cylinder represents gases under pressure.



Health Hazard is used to represent carcinogens, respiratory sensitizers, reproductive toxicity, target organ toxicity, mutagenicity, and aspiration toxicity.



Exclamation Mark is used for irritants, skin sensitizers, acute toxicity, narcotic effects, and respiratory tract irritants.



Environment is used for aquatic toxicity.



Safety in the office

Follow these guidelines to stay safe in the office:

DON'T:

- Leave cords, boxes, and other materials in aisles.
- Leave drawers open to run into or trip over.
- Block emergency exits.
- Use extension cords unless necessary or allow to lie across walkways.
- Stand on chairs! Use a step ladder.
- Leave spills on floors. Promptly clean up wet floors.
- Overload electrical outlets.
- Leave containers of chemicals open.
- Carry loads you can't see over.
- Smoke in unauthorized areas.
- Run in aisles, halls, or on stairways, or engage in horseplay.

