



SAFETY MATTERS

A Newsletter of Hamilton County Human Resources -
Division of Risk Management

Risk
Management
& Safety

April 2014

Volume 1, Number 3

news & notes

Risk Management & Safety Committee

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 10:00am in the Safety & Security Office, Room 628 of the Courthouse.

The purpose of this committee is to bring representatives of the various agencies, departments, and elected officials of Hamilton County together to collaborate on ways to promote a safe environment for employees and the public, and to develop ways to reduce risk to our people, property, and assets.

Contact us:

Paul Allen
Risk Manager
(513) 946-4322

paul.allen@hamilton-co.org

Todd Beekley, ARM
Worker's Compensation Specialist
(513) 946-4703
todd.beekley@hamilton-co.org

Rodney Lofland, CSP
Safety & Security Manager
(513) 946-5059
rodney.lofland@hamilton-co.org

Steve Sears
Safety & Security Specialist
(513) 946-5098
steve.sears@hamilton-co.org

Safety Training Makes Good Sense

Effective Safety Training is a Win-Win for Everyone



Employee safety and health training is a vital part of an effective risk management program. Not only can an effective training program help reduce the number of injuries and illnesses, deaths, property damage, legal liability, workers' compensation claims, and missed time from work, but effective safety training classes help establish a safety culture - one in which all employees consistently promote proper safety procedures while on the job.

An effective safety and health training program also makes good "cents." One example is Bradley County, TN, which reportedly saved more than \$125,000 in 2008 compared to 2007 because of its upgraded safety inspections and stepped up training effort. They reported a 47% drop in workers' comp expenses, according to a report in *The Chattanooga*, and a 23% decrease in workers' comp claims. The county attributes the improvement in employee safety and the corresponding savings of taxpayer money to increased safety awareness through regular safety training.

The Hamilton County Human Resources Department, Risk Management Division provides safety awareness training on a variety of topics through both in-person and on-line delivery systems. To find out more contact Paul Allen, Risk Manager or Rodney Lofland, Safety and Security Manager. (click [here](#) for more information)

Active Shooter Events

Knowing what to do can save lives

At the last Risk Management and Safety Committee Meeting held on 3/19/14, the main topic of discussion was "Active Shooter" events. This issue is being considered regarding updates to the County's Workplace Violence Plan and our emergency action plans for our buildings.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines an active shooter as an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area, typically through the use of firearms. Victims are usually selected at random and the event is unpredictable and evolves quickly. Knowing what to do can save lives.

Check out this [5-minute video](#) listed under "Run, Hide, Fight"

Also, see the [FBI's Active Shooter Quick Reference Guide](#).

news & notes

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.



Detect Cancer Early

What you can do

April is **National Cancer Control Month**, a good time to learn what you can do to detect cancer early—even before you show any symptoms. Follow these five cancer screening guidelines from the American Cancer Society (ACS) to spot the most common cancers as early as possible:

1. **Starting at age 20**, have periodic cancer screenings as part of your regular checkups. Get these areas checked: thyroid, oral cavities, skin, lymph nodes, and sex organs.
2. **Starting at age 21**, women should begin screening for cervical cancer. Get tested every 1 to 3 years, depending on previous results and risk level.
3. **Starting at age 40**, women should have an annual mammogram. Begin breast self-exams in your 20s. If you are at high risk for breast cancer, talk with your doctor about beginning mammograms earlier than age 40.
4. **Starting at age 50**, begin tests for colon and rectal cancers. Tests include flexible sigmoidoscopies every 5 years and colonoscopies every 10. If you are at high risk, speak with your doctor about earlier or more frequent screening.
5. **Starting at age 50**, men should begin screening for prostate cancer. Men at high risk should begin testing at age 45.

The American Cancer Society reports an 82 percent, 5-year survival rate for people who follow ACS-recommended early-detection screening guidelines. Get screened!



April 2014 is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Thousands die needlessly each year because people continue to use their cell phones while driving, handheld or hands-free. Join the National Safety Council this April in urging those you care about to:

- Stop using cell phones while driving
- Recognize that hands-free devices offer no safety benefit
- Understand the dangers of the cognitive distraction to the brain
- Tell others about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving

Visit [National Safety Council](#) for more information.

news & notes

AEDs and CPR

People who are responsible for using an AED should also be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). After the AED delivers a shock, it often prompts the operator to continue CPR while the device continues to analyze the victim. But even if you're not trained in full CPR, you can still give first aid.

When a person isn't breathing, seconds count. Irreversible brain damage occurs within 3 minutes. You must act fast.

The American Red Cross advises that in such cases, bystanders untrained in CPR should call 911 and begin Compression-Only CPR immediately. The reason is that chest compressions will help get oxygen-rich blood circulating sooner than rescue breaths.

Here's how:

- Give 30 chest compressions by placing both hands in the center of the victim's chest with one hand on top of the other and pressing down with the heel of your hand 1 ½ inches to 2 inches.
- Press quickly at a rate of about 100 compressions per minute.

In most places, emergency responders will arrive within 3 to 4 minutes so continue compressions until then.

While these instructions are for untrained bystanders, consider taking full CPR training. Check www.redcross.org for local chapters who offer training or enquire about the County's AED/CPR/First Aid courses.

Who's got Your Back?

The answer is you! You are the first line of defense in preventing injuries to your back and spine. Did you know that back injuries are cited as the most common reason for absenteeism in the general workforce after the common cold? About 80 percent of adults are estimated to experience a back injury in their lifetime, and about 10 percent will suffer a re-injury. Awareness and prevention are your keys to preventing back injuries and pain.

Most Back Pain Results from Wear and Tear

Every time you bend over, lift a heavy object, or sit leaning forward, you put stress on the components of your back and spine. Over time, they can start to wear out and become damaged. Many of the problems that cause back pain are the result of "wear and tear" degeneration of the discs between the vertebrae. Eventually, discs can collapse or become herniated; vertebrae can shift; and nerve compression and bone spurs can develop.

Although our backs hold up well, our lifestyles and activities can lead to back pain and injury. Here are some things that can go wrong:

Strains and sprains are acute or immediate injuries to the back caused by tearing or straining ligaments and muscles. A torn ligament will result in severe back pain.

Ruptured or slipped disk is not uncommon and occurs when the disk presses on a nerve.

Chronic tension or stress can result in muscle spasms and aggravate persistent and painful backache.

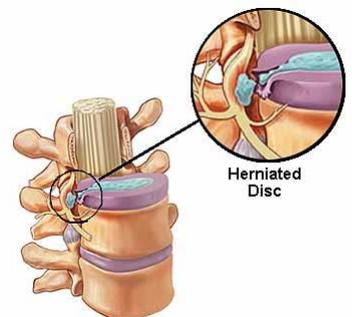
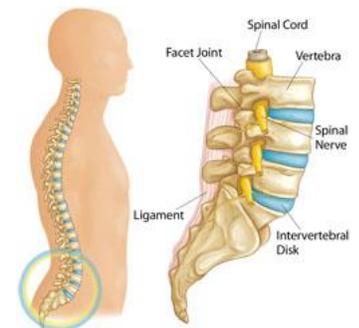
Poor Posture, whether standing, sitting, or reclining, affects the amount of strain put on the back. The wrong posture increases strain on the back muscles and may bend the spine into positions that will cause trouble.

Poor Physical Condition can also lead to back pain. Being overweight can put extra strain on the spine. An estimate is that every extra pound up front puts ten pounds of strain on the back.

Other conditions such as kidney infection and prostate can result in nagging back pain.

Protect Yourself

Many back injuries tend to be the result of cumulative damage suffered over a long period of time. But there are certain actions, motions, and movements that you should avoid that are more likely to cause and contribute to back injuries. These are:



news & notes

Habit forming

Make safety a full-time habit

Good safety practices help protect you and your co-workers from injury or illness on the job. That means that you should consider working safely an important part of your job responsibilities.

- **Know the hazards** of your job.
- **Always follow safety rules** and procedures.
- **Use all personal protective equipment (PPE)** that's assigned to you—every time, all the time.
- **Pay attention to safety training** and apply what you learn on the job.
- **Keep on the lookout for hazards** and keep asking yourself what could go wrong while you work.
- **Eliminate or report any hazards** you see right away.
- **Pay attention to warning signs** and do what they tell you.
- **Be aware when you might be exposed to hazardous chemicals** and take appropriate steps to protect yourself.
- **Read labels**, warnings, safety data sheets (SDSs), and other safety information before you start a job.
- **Practice good housekeeping** at all times.
- **Report any injury**, illness, accident, or near-miss to your supervisor immediately.

Remember when it comes to safety, there's no such thing as a dumb question. If you're not sure about a potential hazard or how to do your job safely, ask your supervisor. Don't perform a task unless you know how to perform it safely!

AVOID TWISTING



Heavy Lifting... Don't lift more than you can handle. Bend at your knees, not at your waist; and lift with your legs keeping your back straight. Keep the weight close to your body. When you put a load down, use these same guidelines in reverse.

Twisting at the waist while lifting or holding a heavy load...This frequently happens using a shovel. Always face the load you are about to lift. Once you're

standing, change directions by pointing your feet in the direction you want to go and turn your whole body. Avoid twisting at your waist while carrying a load.

Reaching and lifting...Avoid reaching and lifting over your head, across a table, or out the back of a truck.

Lifting or carrying objects with awkward or odd shapes...The farther an object is from your body, the greater the force is on your back. Get help with lifting and carrying awkwardly shaped objects.

Working in awkward positions...Kneeling and tasks that require you to bend over for long periods of time can cause stiffness and pain. Taking a one minute stretch break every now and then can help you avoid chronic pain.

Sitting or standing too long in one position...Take frequent, short (micro) breaks and stretch.

Poor Posture...Good sitting posture should put employees' knees slightly higher than their hips. Hips should be to the rear of a chair with the lower back not overly arched. Also, shoulders and upper back should not be rounded. Reclining posture is important, too. Sleeping should be done on a side with the knees bent or on the back. Sleeping on the stomach, especially on a sagging mattress with the head on a thick pillow, puts too much strain on the spine. Result: morning backache.

Awareness and prevention can keep your back out of trouble. Every time you think about lifting, you should think defensively about your back and the possibility of a back strain. Follow good lifting techniques, not only at work, but also at home. With proper exercise, a good diet, and the proper lifting techniques, your chances of developing chronic or severe back pain are greatly reduced.