



TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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Risk Management Issues

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June National Safety Month



National Safety Month is an annual observance to educate and influence behaviors around the leading causes of preventable injuries and deaths.

The National Safety Council (NSC) recognizes June of each year as National Safety Month.

As an agency, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) is committed to emphasizing a safe environment for all employees and offenders.

OFF-THE-JOB SAFETY

U.S. workers are actually safer on the job than in their homes or communities. Home and community deaths are up 74% according to the 2011 edition of the National Safety Council Injury Facts.

SAFETY IS GOOD BUSINESS

Safety doesn't stop when you

bring the safety principles and practices that you follow at work keeps you and your family safe on the roads, in your home and in your community.

This keeps overall injuries and healthcare costs down, keeps productivity up, and empowers you to apply your best safety practices 24/7, wherever you are.



KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY SAFE AT HOME

Keeping your family out of harm's way is your **Number 1** priority. Unfortunately, many of our homes can be dangerous – preventable injuries and deaths continue to rise in homes and communities.

When someone is injured, the effects go beyond that person and extend to family members, friends, neighbors, employers and communities.

The key to preventing injuries is making simple changes to your lifestyle - recognizing where most hazards are and how injuries can occur when participating in different activities.

Below are a few of the many strategies to prevent injuries:

- Stay off your cell phone when you are driving. Your safety practices directly influence the safety practices of your children.
- Get trained in first aid, CPR and AED online or in a classroom.
- Check and if necessary, change the batteries on your smoke and carbon monoxide detector.
- Properly dispose of unused and expired medications.



This year there are four primary areas of focus for National Safety Month, which includes Employee Wellness, Ergonomics, Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls, and Driving Safety.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

Wellness Initiative Now (WIN) is the wellness program for the TDCJ. It was implemented to promote personal well-being, fitness, and nutrition for all TDCJ employees.



The WIN site (listed in the references section) has Activities & Events, Agency Challenge, Health Information & Links, Recipes, and more. Utilize the resource and check it out.

Small changes can make a big difference to your health and wellness. If people made the choices to eat better, engage in more physical activity, reduce the harmful use of alcohol, and quit smoking, at least 80% of all heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes – and over a third of cancers –

could be prevented, according to the World Health Organization.

Poor eating habits and lack of physical activity are the major contributing factors to being overweight and obese in the U.S.

Make healthy eating choices

Healthy eating can reduce the risk of chronic illness and disease, including the three leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, and stroke.

Stay active

For substantial health benefits, adults are encouraged to engage in 30 minutes of moderate exercise*, five days a week

Employee Wellness is affected by many variables like Lifestyle, Psychological, and Health/Biological.

Lifestyle Variables

Lifestyle Variables were broken down into smoking, physical activity, alcohol/drug use, medication use, seatbelt use, and ergonomic considerations.

Psychological Variables

Psychological Variables take into consideration perception of physical health, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and stress.

Health/Biological Variables

Health/Biological Variables include blood pressure, cholesterol, relative body weight,

serious medical problems, illness/absence days, and a Health/Age Index. The biological variables of blood pressure, high cholesterol, and body weight are interrelated. Quite often when someone loses weight, his or her blood pressure and cholesterol levels go down.



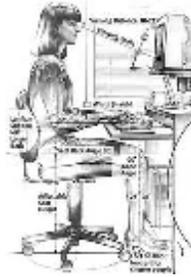
Employers and employees alike have a responsibility to help in the reduction of illnesses and injury in the workplace and to reduce health care claims and costs. It is everyone's benefit to practice strategies to improve health and wellness.

ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics is the science of work / the "laws of work." The science of ergonomics pulls from several different disciplines to collect information on human abilities, limitations, and characteristics as relevant to designing a better workplace.

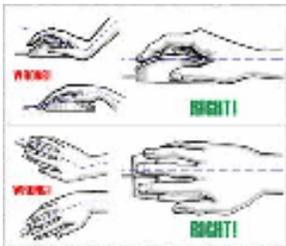
Ergonomics involves designing the job environment to fit the person and is important to take into consideration at work, but also while working on projects at home. It's about learning how to work

smarter and preventing conditions such as overexertion.



Ergonomic conditions are disorders of the soft tissues, specifically of the muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage, blood vessels, and spinal discs.

Remember, these can occur from activities at work, such as working on an assembly line, using heavy equipment or typing on a computer.



They also can result from activities at home like playing video games, helping someone move, participating in hobbies such as sewing or through home repair projects.

PREVENTING SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS

Most falls are preventable. Many people attribute falls to being clumsy or not paying attention, but many risk factors exist.

Risk factors include physical hazards in the environment, age-related issues and health conditions. Reduce your risk and look out for fall hazards in your workplace and home to prevent injuries and keep yourself and others safe round the clock.

How often do you perform a common job without realizing you are creating a potential danger? Like mopping a set of stairs just before a coffee break, moving equipment into the halls at shift turnout, or standing on a chair (just for a second) to reach something on a shelf.

Falls are by far the leading unintentional injury accounting for more than 8.7 million emergency room visits each year in the United States. The worst falls, which often result in serious injuries or death, are from heights like ladders and scaffolding. Be sure to practice ladder and scaffolding safety.

Slips and falls occur every day as a result of inattention. You can minimize accidents and injuries by practicing safety. It is important to spot unsafe conditions that may lead to slips and falls and prevent them before they happen.

Remember to always keep your focus on the task at hand. When you lose concentration, you make yourself vulnerable to unsafe conditions.

Older adults are more prone to become the victim of falls and the resulting injuries can diminish the ability to lead active, independent lives.

One in every three adults age 65 and older falls each year.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, older adults, and people of all ages can prevent falls by:

- Staying active: Chances of falling can be reduced by improving strength and balance. Examples of activities include brisk walking, tai chi and yoga.
- Fall-proofing your home: This includes taking advantage of the tips above and removing all tripping hazards.
- Reviewing your medications: Have your doctor or pharmacist review all the medications you take both prescription and over-the-counter. Some medications or combination of medicines can make you drowsy or light-headed, which can potentially lead to a fall.
- Checking your vision: It's best to have your vision checked at least once a

year to make sure you have the best prescription for your glasses. Poor vision greatly increases your risk of falling.

DRIVING SAFETY

Driving is one of the most dangerous activities you will do each day. As traffic on the roads increases during the summer months, keep in mind the safety tips below to stay safe when driving for work or pleasure.



Distracted Driving

NSC estimates almost 25% of crashes involve cell phone use while driving. Cell phone use while driving isn't just a visual and manual distraction, but a cognitive distraction – taking your mind off the primary task of driving.

That is why hands-free devices offer no safety benefit as your brain is distracted by the conversation. Refrain from using your cell phone when driving.

Safety Belt Use

Research has shown that children are more likely to wear safety belts or use child safety seats when the parent (adult driver) buckles up.

Drivers and front seat passengers who buckle up are 45% more likely to survive motor vehicle crashes and 50%

more likely to avoid serious injuries. Safety belts are one of the most effective safety devices in your vehicle. Safety belts can determine who will walk away from a crash and who will not.

Impaired Driving

In 2009, 32% of all fatalities in motor vehicle crashes involved a driver under the influence of alcohol. Impaired driving simply means a person's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is compromised by alcohol and other drugs that change the function of the brain and body.

Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving behaviors can include speeding, frequent and unnecessary lane changes, tailgating and running red or yellow lights. These behaviors create unsafe situations and can lead to road rage.

Remember, we all share the roads so practice safety.



REFERENCES:

- <http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/win/>
- <http://www.nsc.org/Pages/Home.aspx>
- NSC, Employee Wellness, 83718b
- NSC, Ergonomics, 83718c
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- <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/>
- TDI, DWC, Workplace Wellness Factsheet, HS05-054A
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