



Office Safety



WE ARE THE ARMY'S HOME



Garrison Safety Office (GSO)
U.S. Army Installation Management Command

OFFICE SAFETY

Overview

- General Office Safety
- Materials Handling
- Hazard Communication
- Signs and Tags
- Electrical
- Ergonomics
- Indoor Air Quality
- Noise



General office safety



What most might consider safe office activities, such as using a computer, preparing and filing paperwork, or just walking about the office or building, can and have resulted in accidents.

So, you see, even in an office setting accidents and injuries can happen!

Some Common Causes of Accidents:

- Slip, Trip, and Fall Hazards
- Filing Cabinet Hazards
- Poor Housekeeping
- Horseplay
- Cutting and Puncture Hazards



SLIP, TRIP, and FALL HAZARDS

Outdoor Walkways and Parking Areas

- Trips on uneven walking surfaces
- Slips and falls on ice/snow/mud/sand/gravel

Indoor Hazards

- Trips on rugs and carpets that don't lay flat
- Trips on extension cords running across walkways
- Trips due to poor housekeeping (clutter left on the floor)
- Trips over filing cabinet draws left open
- Falls from improper use of office chairs/horseplay
 - Not looking before sitting
 - Chair being used as a ladder

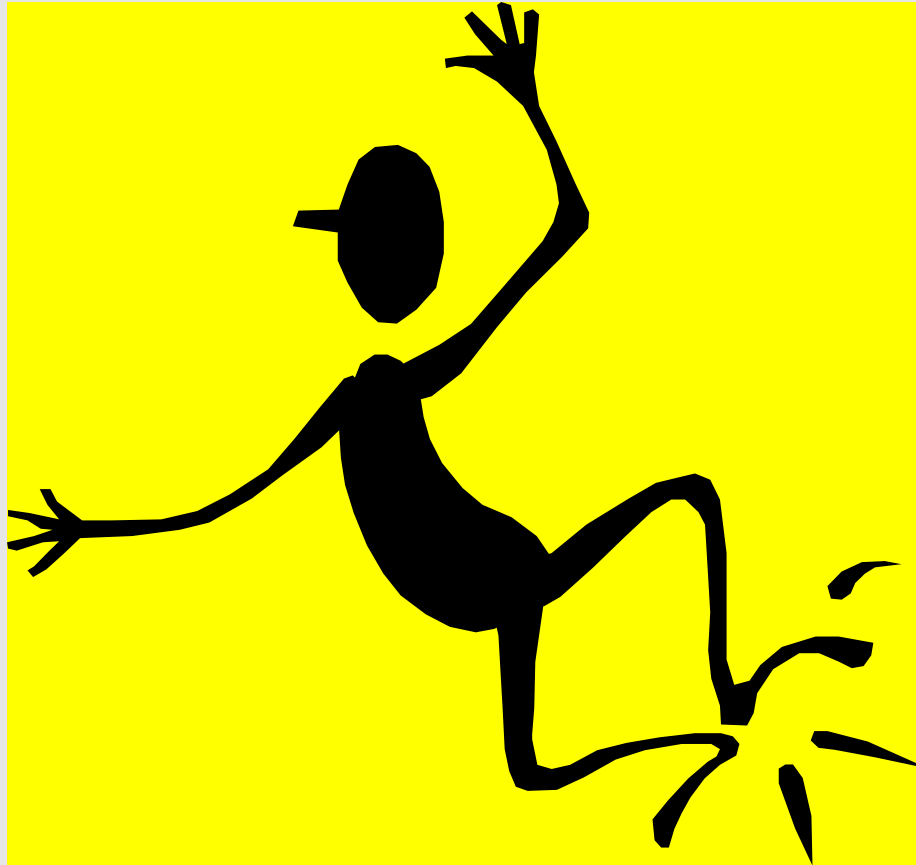


SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

FILE
DRAWERS

STAIRS

CHAIRS



WET
FLOORS

CARPET

PARKING
LOTS



Filing Cabinet Hazards

- Contact with open drawers or sharp corners
- Cabinets placed within walkways and doorways block exits
- Pinched fingers when closing drawers
- Top heavy cabinets can tip over



Poor Housekeeping

- Office clutter can cause accidents

Horseplay

- Joking around, such as running, throwing things, laser pointers etc., can lead to accidents



Prevention

- Locate cabinets out of walking areas and doorways
- Place heavier items in bottom drawers; distribute files equally from top to bottom
- Keep filing cabinets out of walkways and away from doors
- Never walk away leaving file drawers open
- Watch the drawer as you close it (pay attention to where your fingers are)
- Do not load the top of the file cabinet with files/papers
- Keep a tidy office - look professional and avoid accidents
 - Remember records service life, destroy old out of date files (Records Management)



Cutting and Puncture Hazards

- Knives and Box Cutters
- Paper Cutters
- Cutting Shears
- Broken Glass
- Disposed Blades



Prevention

- Use sharp blades (dull blades force you to use more pressure to cut, often causing accidents)
- Never place hand/fingers near cutting blade
- Never pick up broken glass with bare hands. Wear leather gloves and place shards inside a rigid box or container before placing in the trash. Use the same precautions when disposing of used cutting blades
- Always cut away from you; never direct the cutting blade towards you
- To avoid injury, be aware of hand placement relative to the position and anticipated movement of the cutting tool



MATERIALS HANDLING



Office duties may require risky movements that often result in back or other injuries. These movements can include:

- Twisting at the Waist When Lifting
- Lifting or Moving Heavy Items
- Bending Over
- Reaching Overhead or Outward While Lifting

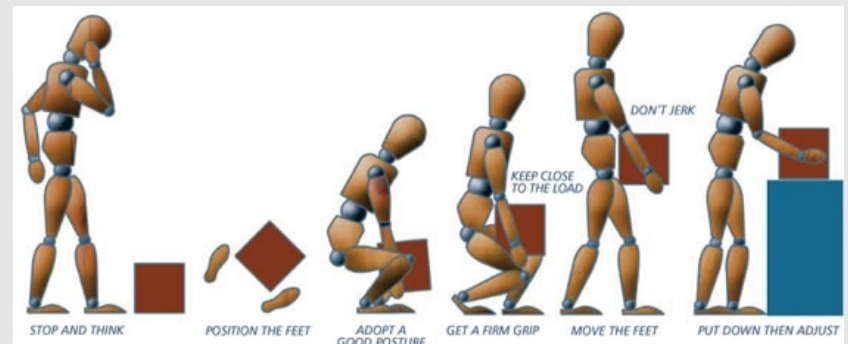


The good news is injuries caused by these activities can be avoided by following a few simple guidelines

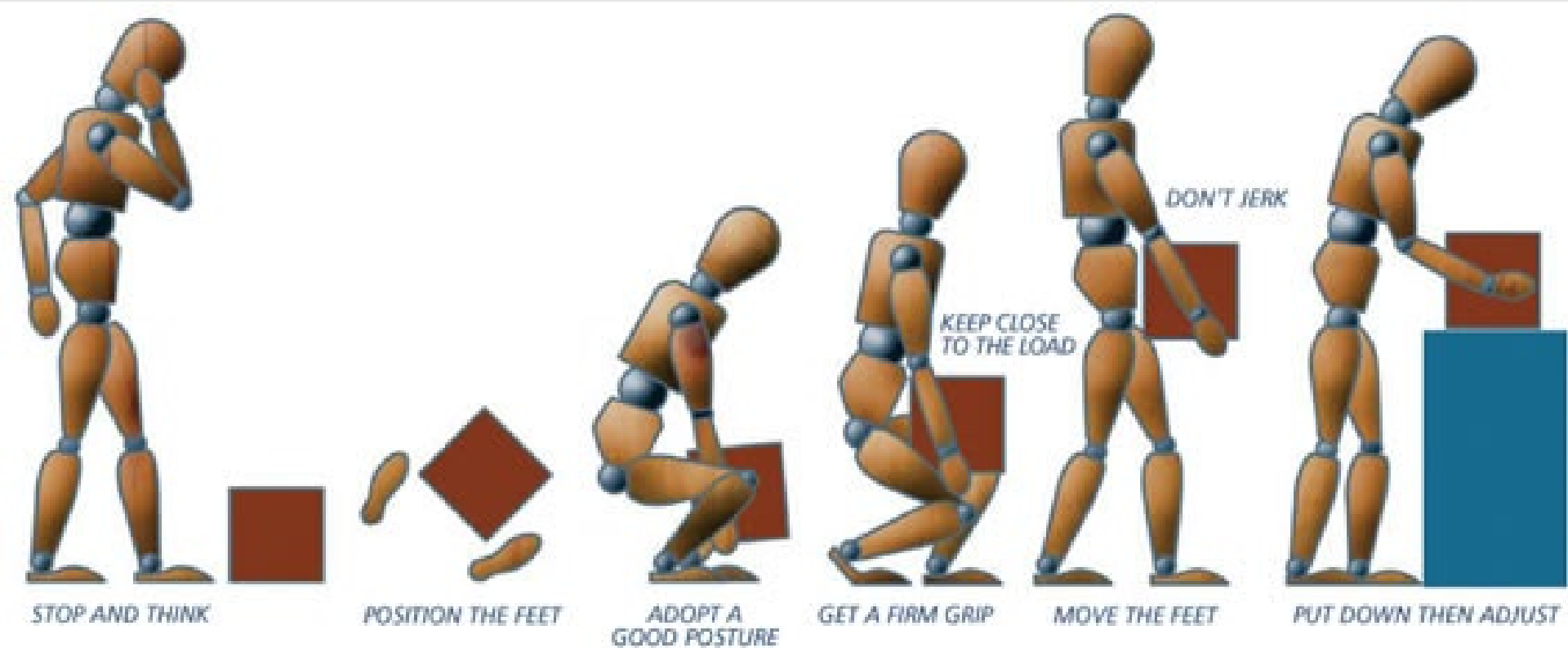
Preventing Lifting Injuries

- **Use proper lifting techniques**

- Think about the task at hand
- Balanced stance with feet placed shoulder-width apart
- Squat down (bend your knees) and hug the load close
- Grasp firmly with entire hand. Use palms and not just fingers
- Lift Gradually, using legs, abdomen, buttock muscles
- Once standing and carrying the load, never twist at the torso. Instead, shuffle your feet to the direction desired.
- Lower the load slowly, don't jerk



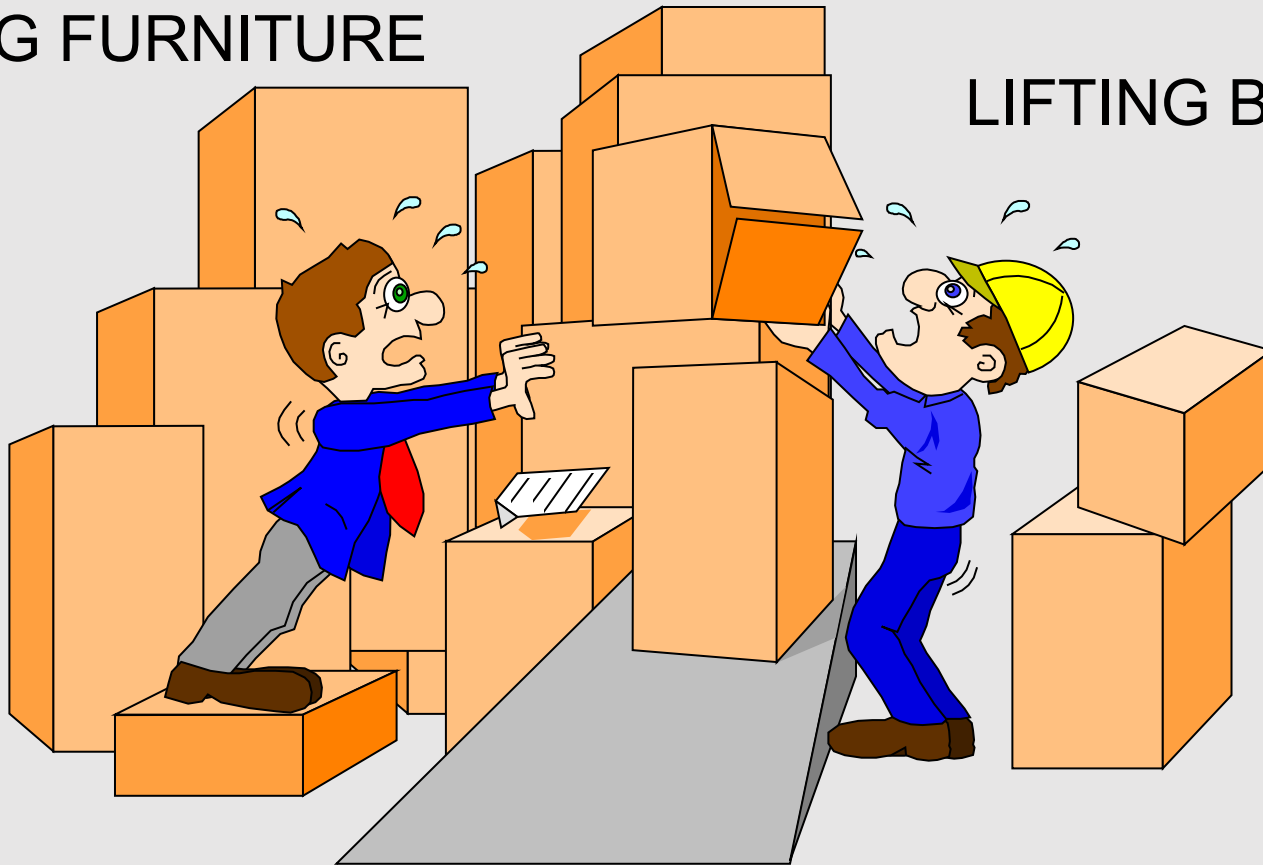
Preventing Lifting Injuries



IMPROPER LIFTING TECHNIQUES

MOVING FURNITURE

LIFTING BOXES



Tips to Help Avoid Injury

- Never carry loads which obscure your clear view ahead
- Always maintain sight of where you are stepping
- Do not lift when your grip is awkward or unsecure
- Ensure your footing is stable
- Never lift heavy loads above the shoulders
- Avoid bending by arranging workstation at waist level
- Limit weight lifted to what you can only carry comfortably
- Best lifting/carrying zone: between shoulders and waist!

When in doubt, ask for help. It beats getting injured!



Material Handling Aids

- Use a pushcart, hand-truck, or dolly for heavier loads
- Always secure the load to prevent shifting during movement
- Always push the load straight ahead; pulling the load results in twisting at the torso which increases the risk of injury

Personal Protective Equipment

- Wear leather gloves when handling materials with sharp edges
- Wear safety glasses when removing banding around pipes

Good Physical Conditioning

- Helps prevent strains, sprains, and other injuries

Situational Awareness

- Learn to recognize and anticipate risky activities
- Take protective measures by utilizing this training



HAZARD COMMUNICATION



- Office workers who encounter hazardous chemicals in only isolated instances are **NOT** required to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard
- OSHA considers most office chemical products to be exempt under the provisions of the rule, either as articles or as consumer products
- Typical office chemical products, such as “White-Out”, adhesives, white board cleaners, toners, etc., meet the above provision as they present a low risk of hazard
- Departments that fall under the above conditions are only required to maintain a “Written Hazard Communication Plan” for their applicable office(s). You can find this plan at:

<https://home.army.mil/stewart/about/Garrison/garrison-staff-offices/safety-office>

The Department Supervisor **must** sign and maintain a copy of the plan which all department employees **must** read and acknowledge

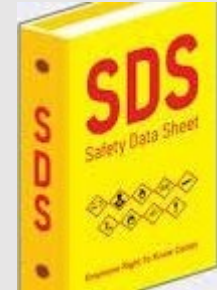


Hazard Communication Plan Thresholds

- Some offices may require additional Hazard Communication training depending on their specific activities outside of the office. Examples include:
 - Using hazardous chemicals to service multiple machines
 - Using hazardous chemicals for extended periods or in quantities beyond normal consumer use
 - Participating in field or lab work using hazardous chemicals
 - Receiving and storing hazardous chemical for a researcher or professor
- If any of these conditions apply to you, consult page 2 of your “UAF Hazard Communication Plan for Office Workers” for additional guidance on additional written plans or training that may be required.












- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) (formerly Material Safety Data Sheets MSDS)
- Are REQUIRED for all chemicals used other than previously discussed
- MUST be kept in the SDS Yellow Book
- MUST be readily accessible for immediate use
- MUST be labeled so employees can readily find individual SDS's
- Some SDS's can be found on the GSO page



<https://home.army.mil/stewart/about/Garrison/garrison-staff-offices/safety-office>

- Each SDS has 16 sections
- You need to know:
 - the name/common name
 - First Aid procedures
 - Pictograms (see next slide)



<p>Carcinogen Respiratory Sensitizer Reproductive Toxicity Target Organ Toxicity Mutagenicity Aspiration Hazard</p>		<p>Acute Toxicity (severe)</p>		<p>Flammables Self-Reactive Pyrophorics Self-Heating Emits Flammable Gas</p>	
<p>Environmental Toxicity</p>		<p>Irritant Derma/Skin Sensitizers Acute Toxicity (Harmful) Transient Target Organ Effects (narcotic or respiratory)</p>		<p>Oxidizers Organic Peroxides</p>	
<p>Corrosives</p>		<p>Gases under Pressure</p>		<p>Explosive Self-Reactive Organic Peroxides</p>	

Signs and Tags



- Many operations involve a certain element of risk
- Safety signs and tags have been developed as one means of preventing workplace accidents and injuries. They warn about hazards:
- So, you can take appropriate precaution
- Using distinguishable sign color, symbols and labels to identify levels of hazard and risk
- Using DANGER, CAUTION, SAFETY INSTRUCTION and other signs and tags



SIGNS AND TAGS

Danger:

Indicates immediate danger and that special precautions are required



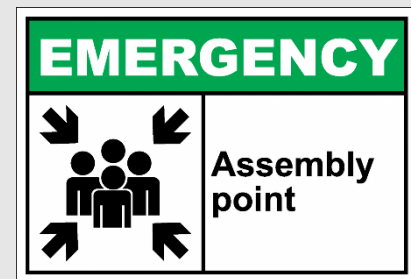
Caution:

Indicates possible hazard against which proper precautions should be taken



SIGNS AND TAGS

Safety Instructions: Provide general instruction and suggestions relative to safety measures



Ask your supervisor about your work-specific signs



ELECTRICAL SAFETY



Basic Electrical Safety Precautions

- **Overloaded Outlets:** Overloading electrical circuits and extension cords can result in a fire
- **Electrical Cords across Walkways and Work Areas:**
Present a tripping hazard . . . use a cord runner instead
- **Improper Placement of Cords:** Never pull or drag over sharp objects that may cause cuts in the insulation. Never place on hot or wet surfaces, or through walls, windows, doors, or ceilings
- **Defective, frayed or improperly installed cords:** Exposed wires can lead to electrical shock, always inspect before use
- **Electrical Panel Doors:** Should always be kept closed to protect against "electrical flashover" in the event of an electrical malfunction. Maintain 36" of clearance in front of electrical panels!



Basic Electrical Safety Precautions

- **Unsafe/Non-Approved Equipment:** Look for UL Listed Label
- **Live Parts Unguarded:** Ensure wall receptacles have covers
- **Pulling of Plugs to Shut Off Power:** Use equipment switch or have one installed
- **Jammed Office Machinery:** Always follow the equipment manual for clearing a jam
- **Defective Equipment:** Replace defective equipment immediately!



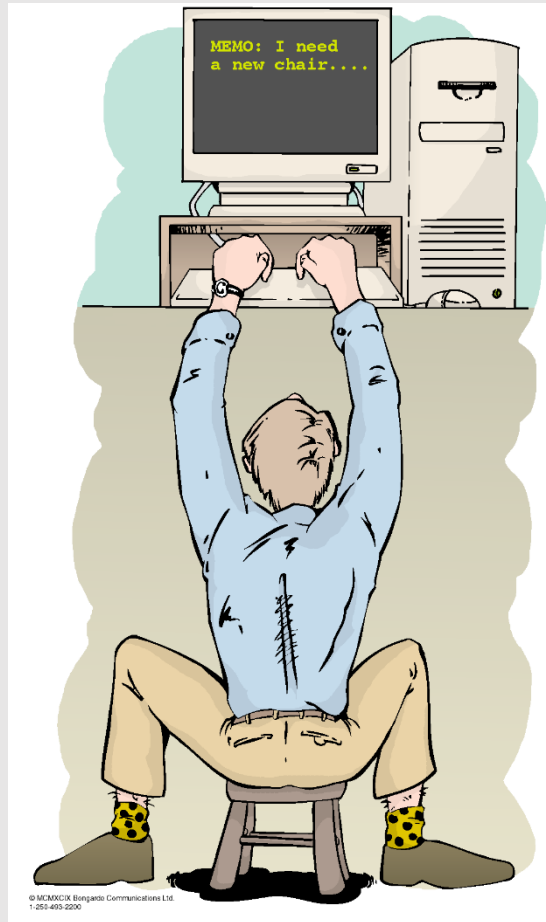
Example: Even though this power strip was involved in an electrical fire, it had not been taken out of service

Basic Electrical Safety Precautions

- Major end items (printer, copier, microwave, coffee pot and backup power systems (UPS) **MUST** be plugged directly into the wall socket **NEVER** into a multi-plug, surge protector or extension cord
- Sockets around break rooms where water/liquid could be spilled must be GFCI type
- Along the wall where multiple wall sockets are at least one in the electrical line must be a GFCI



ERGONOMICS



- Ergonomics - fancy word for the science of arranging and adjusting the work environment to fit the employee's body.
- The FSGA/HAAF Ergonomic Program offers:
 1. Training and Awareness
 2. Workstation Evaluations
 3. Corrective Actions and Recommendations
- The Garrison is responsible for injuries sustained due to ergonomics under OSHA Regulations 29 CFR 1910, General Duty clause



Occupational Risk Factors

- **Repetition** – task or series of motions performed over and over
- **Forceful Exertions** - amount of physical effort required to complete task
- **Awkward Postures** - reaching, twisting, bending, holding fixed positions
- **Contact Stress** – localized pressure exerted against the skin by external force
- **Vibration Stress** – vibration caused by tools is the most common i.e. grinders
- **Signs and Symptoms** include: pain, numbness, tingling, stiffness, decreased range of motion, white skin (not Caucasian)



Mitigation Factors

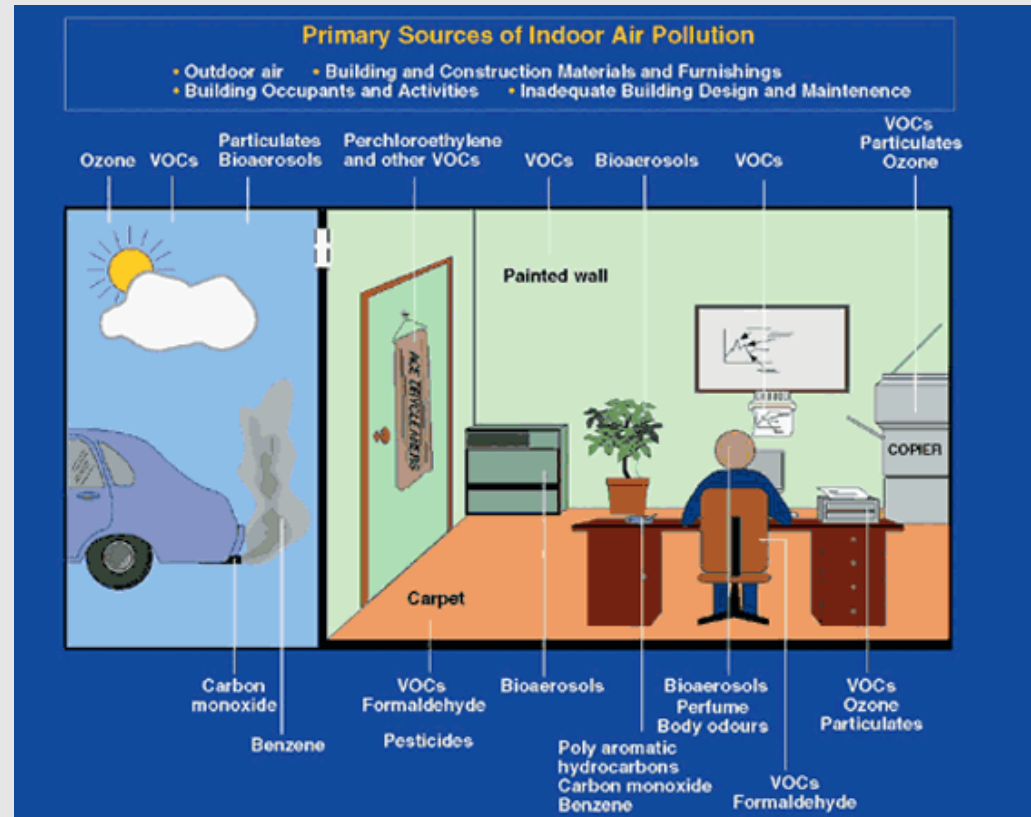
- **Repetition:** take adequate breaks from tasks that you complete over and over again
- **Forceful Exertions:** Minimize force during tasks using as light of a touch as possible
- **Awkward Postures:** locate phones and computers so they are easy viewed and used and no twisting is required for access.
- **Contact Stress:** if you find you are leaning or resting body parts on hard surfaces change configurations of your equipment, phone or chair height
- **Vibration Stress:** limit time using the vibrating tool, obtain and use vibration dissipation items (some gloves and handle add-on items APPROVED by manufacturer)



INDOOR AIR QUALITY



- Many things can affect indoor air quality:
 - Ventilation
 - Smoking and vehicle exhaust
 - Temperature, humidity, and carbon dioxide
 - Mold
 - Office supplies and personal products
 - Dust and other particulates



Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Factors

- **IAQ can be affected by:**
 - Ventilation
 - Blocking open doors that have automatic door closers
 - Blocking Vents
 - Making small offices out of larger offices
 - Smoking and vehicle exhaust
 - Do not smoke or idle a vehicle near building entrances or air intakes



Indoor Air Quality Factors (cont.)

– Mold

- Mold occurs naturally outdoors and indoors
- Mold needs water to grow, as well as a source of food (sheetrock, paper, wood, insulation)
- If your office is flooded, it is extremely important to dry the walls and carpet as soon as possible (24-48 hours)
- Call DPW to report the flood or leak so that it can be repaired

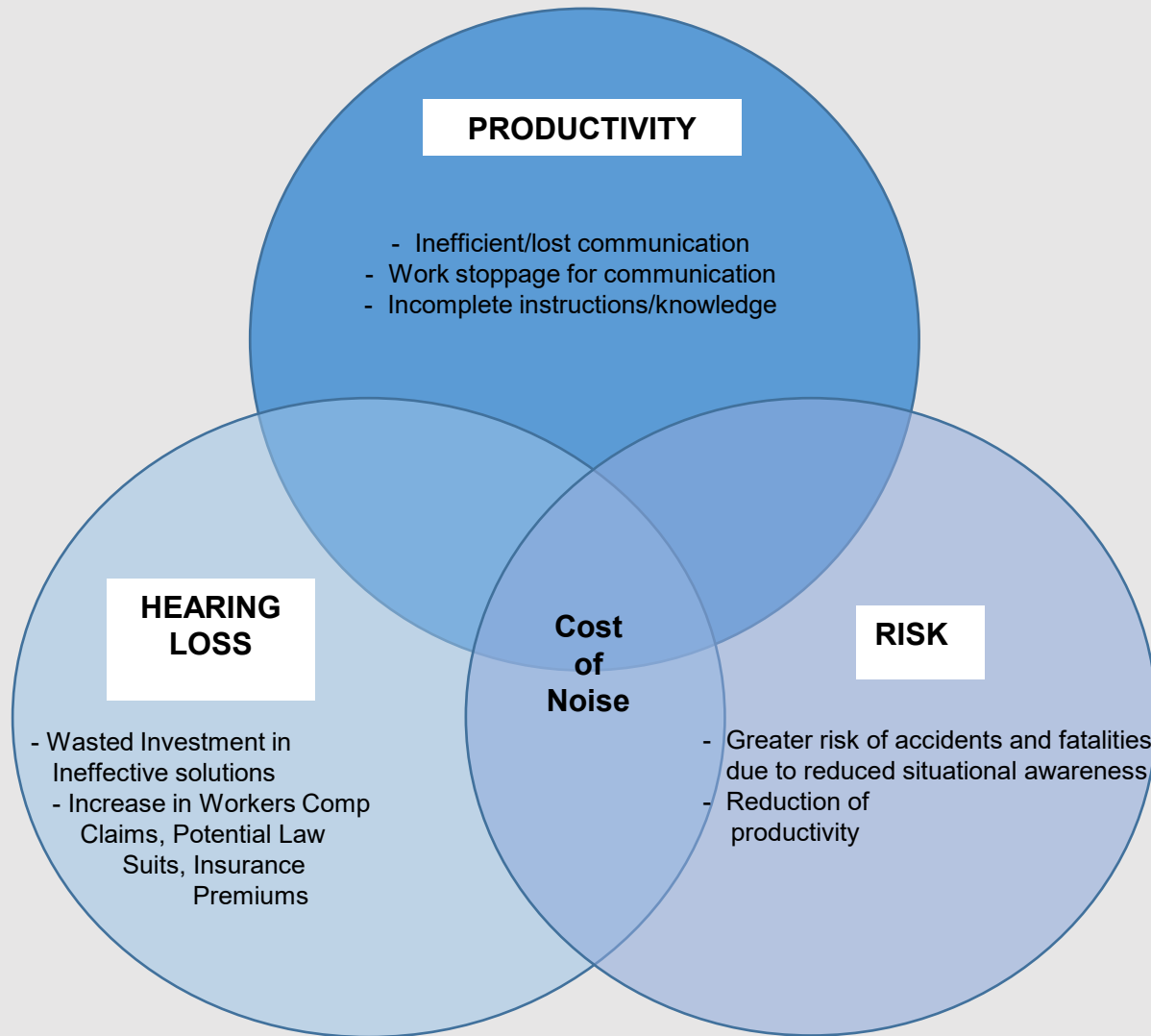


Indoor Air Quality Factors (cont.)

- Office supplies and personal products that can cause respiratory and eye irritation
 - Dry erase markers and cleaners, markers
 - Bleach and bleach wipes
 - Window and surface cleaners
 - Perfumes
 - Air fresheners, deodorizers and potpourri
 - Hand Sanitizers
- Dust, chipped paint, insulation particulates and other particulates can cause respiratory irritation
 - Dust your work area regularly and keep it clean
 - Custodial staff cannot dust your desk for you!



Noise



- Noise is any sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or undesired
- Acceptable levels will vary with the individuals in the office
- While it is unlikely that noise levels in offices will reach damaging levels, noise can:
 - Create physical and psychological stress
 - Reduce productivity
 - Interfere with communication and concentration

10-20 is a whisper, 60-80 is conversation 85 dBs is dangerous
Remember 3-foot rule, if you must shout, it is too loud in your area.



- **Sources of noise in the office include:**
 - Printers/fax machines
 - Computers
 - Phones
 - Voices
 - Ventilation/Heating Systems
 - High foot traffic
 - Radios
 - Maintenance rooms



- **Sources of noise in the workplace include:**
 - Power tools
 - Vehicles
 - Generators
 - Radios



- **Noise can be reduced by:**
 - Choosing the quietest equipment
 - Maintaining equipment
 - Reducing the ring volumes on phones
 - If radios are allowed, keeping volumes low
 - Placing noisy equipment in a separate room or as far away from workstations as possible
 - Rearrange work areas to isolate foot traffic
 - Carpet, walls, and cubicles can help dampen noise



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