



Water, Water, Everywhere

All buildings are subject to water damage during their lifetime, especially the older buildings with beautiful architecture like many of the ones we're lucky enough to have at OHSU. The management of water damage related issues or concerns is designed to significantly reduce and/or eliminate microbial growth, which can help ensure

the health of the people within the building. In order to succeed, we need everyone's help with this process.

If you notice a water leak or evidence of a leak:

- Take immediate action to stop/control water leak, if possible. This may involve using towels to soak up the water. Be careful of slip hazards!
 - Call **4-4444** for large or emergent active leaks
- OR**
- Call 6-0000 or 4-7744 for smaller, non emergent leaks

Facilities and Real Estate (F&RE) will respond to your report. Depending on many factors (the amount and source of the water, the building materials and location affected and the scope of the damage, etc.), a team of experts may be called in to decide on next steps. This team includes representatives from Risk Management, Infection Prevention and Control, Environmental Health & Radiation Safety and F&RE.

Many of the things they consider in next steps include:

- Do employees, patients or visitors need to be moved or relocated?
- Can wet or damaged building materials (including carpeting) be dried out within 48-72 hours or do they need to be removed and replaced?
- What furniture and equipment can be cleaned and what needs to be replaced?
- Are there any special cleaning needs (i.e. for patient care areas) before being re-opened?

REWARD!



Have you seen this chair around campus? You may have received it on loan to try out. If you know of its whereabouts, please call Environmental Health and Radiation Safety at 4-7795

Moving On:



We've enjoyed the service of Margaret Gardner as our Safety Team Coordinator and SafetyNews Editor since November 2008. We wish her all the best in her new position at OHSU!

Thanks Margaret!



For environmental and health safety concerns in your area, SafetyNews questions or suggestions, or any related questions, contact EHRS at:
503-494-7795 or safeteam@ohsu.edu



Topic of the Month:

GOOD HAND CARE

The leading cause of hand irritation at work is skin rash. A few of the more common causes include: overexposure to water, dry air (especially common in winter), soaps and detergents, solvents, cleaning agents, latex, and ingredients in skin care products. Healthcare, research, and employees in all areas can benefit from good hand health precautions. Take care of your hands!

Hand Washing

Remove rings prior to washing hands since they trap soap and moisture next to the skin. Use warm water and rinse thoroughly after soaping for 10 to 15 seconds. Apply moisturizer soon after towel drying hands to retain the most moisture in your skin.



Use small quantities of soap, since soap strips natural oils from skin. These oils help your skin retain moisture. Avoid detergents and perfumed or deodorant soaps, as these may actually irritate skin. Regardless of the type of soap used, frequent hand washing will cause increased skin dryness.

Hand Sanitizer



Hand sanitizers are a good alternative to hand washing, unless your hands are visibly soiled. (If so, dirt must be washed away with soap and water.) Rub sanitizer over skin surfaces until dry. The product approved for use in OHSU Healthcare is Avagard D (available from Logistics).

Lotions and Moisturizers

If hand or forearm skin becomes irritated, lotion should be used after hand washing. The only lotion approved for use in OHSU Healthcare is Cavilon (also available from Logistics). Other lotions may be used in non-clinical areas and while away from work.

Apply moisturizers liberally after hand washing and immediately after bathing for best moisture retention.

When selecting moisturizers, the simpler and messier the better (think petroleum jelly)! Water-based moisturizers are usually the least effective.



Gloves

Nitrile, plastic, and vinyl are easier on hands than latex. Powder-free is less likely to irritate than powdered gloves. Just make sure that you have the right glove to protect you from chemicals and/or biologicals you use. If in doubt, seek advice from Environmental Health & Radiation Safety.



Stretching

If you use your hands for fine detail work (e.g. - typing, surgery, handwriting, etc.), it is important that you take breaks to stretch your hands and wrists. Go through a full range of gentle motions, including flexion, extension, and rotation. These will keep muscles and joints warmed and ready to perform! See suggested stretches on the next page.

Other Precautions

- Wear gloves when peeling or pressing oranges, lemons, grapefruits, tomatoes, peppers, or onions.
- Avoid skin contact with solvents, stain removers, fuels, and cleaning products.
- Don't pick at loose skin or cuticles. These are best trimmed using a sharp nail clipper or scissors.



Questions?

Good hand care is essential to preserve your ability to remain comfortable while working. If hands remain dry or irritated for more than a couple of days and attempts to soothe and repair them fail, consult Employee Health at 503-494-5271.

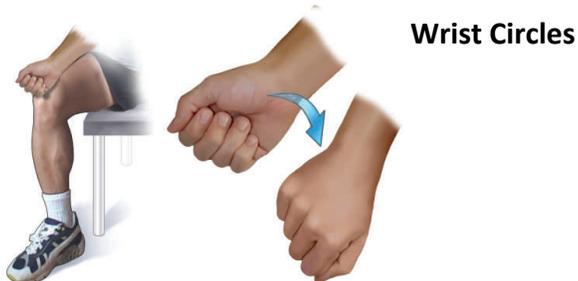
Employee Health on the Ozone:

<http://ozone.ohsu.edu/employeehealth/>

Break for Hand Stretches

Here is a selection of stretches that can be done while seated or standing.

If you feel any discomfort or pain while performing any of these stretches, STOP immediately and consult your health care provider before continuing.



Wrist Circles



Thumb Stretch



Flexing Forward and Back



Staying Healthy through the Season

In winter months, the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units within our buildings work hard to provide fresh and comfortable air to your workspace. When it's especially cold outside, these units work even harder. Indoor heating may result in lower humidity in a given work area or building. This is normal for indoor seasonal change.

The drying out of indoor air can occasionally lead to upper respiratory symptoms such as dry throat, dry mucus membranes, and itchy, watery eyes. Similar symptoms can surface in our home environments as we adjust to the heating season, particularly for homes with forced air heating.

The best way to combat these symptoms is to make sure you stay well hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids while maintaining healthy habits, and be season-smart!



For a current issue of SafetyNews online, and for archives, visit:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safetynews.cfm>

The SafetyTeam page is available at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/ehrs/safety/gen/safetyteam.cfm>

These pages are updated regularly. If there are OHSU resources you'd like to see linked, please send suggestions to the SafetyTeam Coordinator at:

safeteam@ohsu.edu

Systems Thinking:

Safety Training

SAIF, OHSU's Workers' Compensation carrier, has been working cooperatively with a couple of pilot departments at OHSU



to provide training with the expectation of reducing musculoskeletal injuries for our employees. Safety in Motion® is a proven set of techniques to: reduce stress and strain, boost balance and strength, and improve productivity. Employees learn to make simple, practical changes in the way they reach, lift, carry, push, or pull. These changes make most tasks both easier and safer, at work or home. The program is presented in four short modules.



Safety in Motion® has been used by many large Fortune 500 companies with very successful results (10-60% fewer injuries). Some of the clients include Boeing, Disneyland, Westinghouse, Exxon-Mobil, Coca Cola.....and now OHSU!

Questions? Ask Environmental Health & Radiation Safety:

503-494-7795

