

Lookin' Good!



Take care of your eyes

The American Optometric Association notes that up to 75 percent of all computer users have had eye and vision problems related to computer use at work. Eyestrain and resulting headaches have been found to reduce accuracy and productivity.

As OHSU relies more on computers every day, you must remember to take care of your eyes. While everyone is different, the following suggestions can help you maximize your comfort at work:

Prescription lenses - Even if you don't usually use glasses at home, a pair for computing can reduce vision stress. These can be quite inexpensive.

Glasses that work for the job - Different prescriptions may be needed for specific types of work, even for those who already require and wear prescription lenses. Some people wear bifocal or progressive lenses to address this, but these don't always work well, due to the lower focal pathway.

(Eye Care Continued on page 3)

Shared Successes

The following are interesting progress notes from SafetyTeam members' activities:

- Hallway mirrors at right-angled intersections in the Hatfield Research Center were added to increase visibility of oncoming "traffic".
- A visitor in the School of Dentistry tripped over a rubber mat in the entryway. The mats were inspected and were not found to be in disrepair. The mats will stay in place because they are there to prevent slips and falls in case of wet conditions on the tile floors underneath.
- MSDS books in Food Services were updated and PPE was re-evaluated and updated.

Please continue to submit your monthly member update forms so that your safety concerns continue to be addressed. Don't forget to answer the Question of the Month, where correct answers will earn you valuable SafetyPoints!

Excellent Work Everyone!



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Topic of the Month

This month's specialized training topic is a discussion of:



Basic Radiation Safety. This information is only applicable to certain OHSU buildings and operations, and each area may be slightly different.

There are many types of radiation. Familiar types of radiation like microwave, sunlight, such as x-rays, can only be detected using special instruments. **Ionizing radiation** is the focus of this article.

Clinical Application

X-rays and radionuclides are used in medicine and dentistry to detect and treat diseases. Other use includes fluoroscopy devices to guide physicians during special procedures.

Research Application

Radionuclides are used in research as tracers for certain molecules, chemicals, or cellular activities. It allows us to see the destination or process that is of interest. Examples include studies of metabolism of a drug, activities of enzymes, and concentrations of compounds in body fluids.

Recognition

Areas or laboratories where radiation is used will display the Radiation symbol pictured here:



Be aware of areas that display this symbol. Employees who work with or around radiation are trained in its use and safety.

Protection

To minimize radiation exposure:

1. Minimize your time spent near high energy radiation sources;
2. Maximize the distance between sources and you. Radiation intensity decreases greatly with distance; and
3. Shield yourself from sources, using lead, Lucite, or other materials appropriate for your source. Wear protective clothing, when appropriate.

Also... Never eat or drink around areas where radioactive materials are used and never store food and drinks with radioactive materials.

Pregnant?

An embryo/fetus is more sensitive to radiation than an adult, particularly during the first few months of growth. Therefore, special guidelines have been developed to protect the unborn child. Information regarding prenatal radiation exposure is available from the Radiation Safety office.

Radioactive Spill?

- Contact Radiation Safety if you have questions about how to clean a spill. After hours spills may be reported to 4-4444;
- Control access to the area and warn others. Do not leave the area until the spill is cleaned up;
- If the spill has come in contact your skin, immediately wash with soap and water.

If you have any questions about radiation and its use, call OHSU Radiation Safety at

503-494-7795

<http://ozone.ohsu.edu/ehrs/mh/pages/rad/>

Take your breaks - These are provided for you to get up and away from your work. You should at least do something different for a while to allow your eyes to rest.

Reduce room lighting - Glare from even normal office light levels and windows can contribute to eye strain. Consider turning on only half the lights in an area to see what a difference this can make. Never turn on under-cabinet lighting behind your computer monitor. Reposition computer monitors at right angles to light sources to minimize glare.



Use your copy holder - Adjustable copy holders should ideally hold reference materials between the monitor and the keyboard, inline with both. Positions to the side can sometimes cause neck pain. Materials should be at the same distance from the eyes as the screen.

Adjust your work area - Maximize your comfort and productivity by ensuring the right adjustments of your chair, desk height, keyboard, mouse, telephone, and other frequently-used items. OHSU purchases adjustable office equipment to assure that your needs are met, so give yourself permission to adjust it! If you need help, talk with your supervisor or seek ergonomic advice:

<http://ozone.ohsu.edu/ehrs/mh/pages/gen/ergo.shtml>

Clean your screen - Computer screens can get smudged and dirty, and our eyes sometimes get distracted by this dirt. Wipe your screen clean by using window cleaner or special alcohol-based screen wipes to keep your view clear.

Q of M Answer!

Last month's Question of the Month was from the Focus Topic, "Fire Safety and Evacuation."

The question was, "**Where can you find out what chemicals can be disposed of down the drain?**"

The Waste Disposal Grids contain information about what can be drain disposed: <http://ozone.ohsu.edu/ehrs/mh/pages/chem/waste.shtml>. **You may also get this list by calling 503 494-2585.**

Thank you to everyone who participated! If you answered correctly, you earned 1 SafetyPoint! Contact Kristine Abrahamson at 503 494-0215 for answers to your questions.

Handy Links



Oregon OSHA

<http://www.osha.gov>

National Safety Council

<http://www.nsc.org/>

American Industrial Hygiene Assoc.

<http://www.aiha.org/>

Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.gov>

National Standard Institute

<http://www.ansi.org>

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

<http://www.nrc.gov>

How Stuff Works

<http://howstuffworks.com>



Slow down in Construction Work Zones!

SAFETYNEWS

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July 2006

Question of the Month

The question of the Month is designed to challenge your safety knowledge and give you a chance to earn some cool, free stuff!



QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What are 3 ways to protect yourself from radiation exposure?

Write your answer to the question in the appropriate box on your Monthly Member Update Form: <http://ozone.ohsu.edu/ehrs/mh/pages/safeteam/mmuf.shtml>. Correct answers to this month's Question will earn 1 SafetyPoint.

If you would like to become a member, contact Kristine Abrahamson, SafetyTeam Coordinator at 503 494-7795.

OHSU

OHSU includes four schools; two hospitals; numerous primary care and specialty clinics; multiple research institutes; and several public service and outreach units. OHSU is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution.

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Oregon Health & Science University
3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Road, PP 170
Portland, OR 97239

503 494-7795
safeteam@ohsu.edu