OHSU SafetyNews

The Monthly Update for the OHSU SafetyTeam | Editor: Kristine Abrahamson | November 2005

DUCK AND COVER!

Earthquake Country

The Pacific Northwest is an area of the country where seismologists predict an earthquake could occur and cause significant damage. As recently as 2001, the Seattle area had an earthquake that registered 6.8 on the Richter Scale. Seismologists have only been measuring seismic activity in this region for 50 years though, which is not enough time to predict when the "Big One" will hit.

Residents of the Pacific Northwest can prepare for the damage an earthquake can cause by making sure to:

- Bolt bookcases, cabinets, and other tall furniture to walls.
- Install strong latches on cabinets.

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Inside this Issue:

Shared Successes

We have had great success in resolving all issues brought to the SafetyTeam in the last few months.

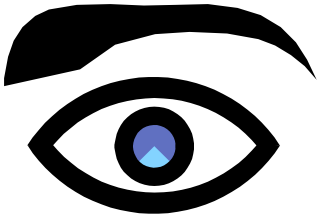
Great job everyone!

If you have any safety concerns or questions, please let the SafetyTeam Coordinator know so she can help!

Thanks members… be safe!

AFSCME Labor/Management Cooperation OHSU

Topic of the Month



This is a discussion of **Eye and Face Protection,** Which is part of the **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** guidelines. Safety glasses, face shields, and masks are all examples of PPE. It is important to wear PPE **everytime** that a blood, body fluid, or chemical or radiation **exposure is possible**, **not just expected.** This is a conservative approach (sounds like Standard Precautions?), but you never know when an accidental exposure will occur.

Nearly three out of every five eye injury victims were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident.

Prevention of eye injuries requires that all people who may be in eye hazard areas wear protective eyewear. This includes employees, patients, visitors, researchers, and contractors.

The basics of eye and face protection include:

- Safety glasses and masks (not including surgical masks) are adequate face protection from blood and body fluids, in many cases.
- Safety glasses and face shields shall be used when there is a hazard from chemical splash.
- Face shields shall only be worn over primary eye protection (safety glasses or goggles).
- Side protectors, on ANSI-approved safety-glasses, are required with flying object hazards.
- Contact lenses are **not** adequate eye protection, and may result in additional irritation when worn in contaminated atmospheres.
- For employees who wear glasses, eye protectors shall either incorporate the prescription in the design or fit properly over the glasses.

Appropriate filter lenses shall be used to protect against light radiation. Tinted/shaded lenses are not filter lenses unless they are marked or identified as such.

In addition to knowing what PPE to use, employees must understand how/when to properly use it. **Employees injured while not wearing protective eyewear most often have said they believed it was not required by the situation.** OHSU provides eye protection at **no cost to employees**, and we train employees on where and what kind of eyewear should be used.

Different styles are available to optimize fit and comfort and reduce annoying problems like fogging. Some even have built-in magnification lenses! Lots of options are available, and none of these are expensive.

Eye and face protection is available in a variety of different sizes and styles, because we know that the number one aversion to wearing PPE is the issue of comfort and fit. PPE is most effective when it fits properly, and simply training employees on how to wear it can increase the protective value of PPE.

Every piece of PPE has limitations as to how effective it is at preventing exposures. In the case of eye protection, there may still be the possibility of liquids, aerosols, and gases passing around the edges of the protective equipment. Employees need to understand these limitations.

Questions? Call EHRS: 4-7795

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- Keep cabinet doors closed and latched when not in use.
- Store hazardous materials in secure cabinets and drawers.
- Keep heavy, unsecured objects off overhead shelving.
- Prepare an emergency supply kit for your home and work

During an earthquake, you also want to take the following precautions:

- **DROP, COVER, AND HOLD ON!** Move a few steps to a nearby safe place. Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you're sure it's safe to exit. Do not run outside during shaking due to dangers from falling debris.
- **Inside a building?** Take cover under a desk or table away from windows. Place your head between your knees to protect your head and neck. Stay in the innermost corner of the room.
- **DO NOT** try to use elevators during a quake! Fire alarms and sprinklers may activate during a strong quake.
- **Outdoors?** Move as far as possible from buildings to avoid broken glass and falling objects.
- **In a car?** Slow down and drive to a clear place (as described above). Stay in the car until the shaking stops.

Want More Information? Click Below:

http://ozone.ohsu.edu/emergency/eq.shtml

Q of M Answer!

Last month's Question of the Month was from the Focus Topic, **"Planning Ahead."**

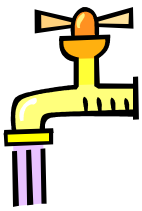
The question was,

"What are two essential elements of an effective Emergency Management Plan?"

1. **Hazard Identification and Mitigation:** Before an emergent event, possible hazards should be identified and plan made to eliminate them or reduce their impact, if possible.
2. **The PLAN: Continuity and Recovery:** The plan should consider how to continue essential services or operation in case of an event, and also how to recover as quickly as possible

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.

Keeping Drinking Water Safe: BACKFLOW PREVENTERS



Safe-drinking water supplies at OHSU are protected from cross-contamination from drains and non-potable water backflow by BACKFLOW PREVENTERS. Without them, it is likely that our water could be contaminated by backflow from drains! Yuck!

Like all equipment used to protect the health and safety of others, backflow preventers are tested on an annual basis to make sure they are working properly. OHSU has specialists on staff that perform this task. The task is a dirty one, as these supply lines are often underground.

Thanks to all who do this line of work to make sure our drinking water stays safe!

Environmental Health and Radiation Safety - SafetyTeam
Oregon Health & Science University
3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Rd, PP170
Portland, OR 97239

Slow down in Construction Work Zones!

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

When should you wear eye protection?

Write your answer to the question in the appropriate box on your SafetyTeam Member Update form. Correct answers to this month's Question will earn 1 SafetyPoint.

If you are not currently a SafetyTeam member and would like to participate, 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.

The SafetyNews newsletter is a publication of the OHSU SafetyTeam, and is a joint effort of AFSCME and OHSU.

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

503 494-7795
safeteam@ohsu.edu