

Safety Newsletter

A quarterly publication for injury and illness prevention

Winter 2021



FIRE SAFETY TIPS

Just a friendly reminder to refrain from the following in your classrooms and work spaces:

- **Misuse of Electrical Extension Cords**
Use only approved circuit breaker protected outlet strips. Power strips should not be plugged into each other; they must connect directly to an outlet. Overloaded extension cords can overheat and cause a fire. A circuit breaker protected outlet strip will “trip”, or shut off, if it becomes overloaded, decreasing the chance of a fire.
- **Blocked Fire Exits**
Marked exit doors must be kept unlocked and able to open freely. The exit access must be clear anytime the school is occupied and kept free of obstructions, including corridors leading to emergency exits.



Winter Risk Management Checklist



Winter introduces seasonal hazards such as: cold-related illnesses & injuries; icy roads; frozen pipes. Here are some tips to keep your district safe this winter.

- **PEOPLE**
 - Plan, equip, and train your employees to work safely in the cold.
 - Remind employees to use space heaters safely.
 - Keep sidewalks, parking lots, and other walkways clear of ice and snow.
 - Don't forget about the flu. It is possible to get infected with the flu and COVID-19 at the same time.
- **PROPERTY**
 - Clear ice and snow from roofs and tree limbs.
 - Seal leaks and insulate pipes and faucets, especially if they are outside a facility.
 - Prepare your fire sprinkler systems for winter weather.
 - Remind staff to avoid hanging decorations from fire sprinkler heads, light fixtures, and ceiling tiles.
- **VEHICLES**
 - Give your vehicles the special care they need during the winter.
 - Reinforce safe winter driving practices.
 - Monitor road conditions to reduce the risk of accidents.



- **Excess Storage & Decorations**

Storage must be kept 18” below the ceiling areas.

Excess storage contributes to the spread of fire. Use only flame retardant decorations and limit wall displays to 20% of the total wall area. Decorations shall not cover or hide:

- Windows
- Utility or emergency features (light switches, electrical outlets, breaker panels, emergency warnings).

Additional Fire Safety Tips:

- Practice your school’s emergency evacuation plans regularly.
- Know the location of each classroom’s fire extinguisher.
- Open flames, including candles are prohibited.
- Keep liquids away from electrical outlets/cords.
- Never use frayed or broken electrical cords.
- Turn off all holiday decorations/lights before leaving the room.

Powered Equipment Safety



IF UNSURE ABOUT HOW TO OPERATE A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, CONSULT YOUR SUPERVISOR BEFORE USE.

The use of powered equipment, such as riding lawn mowers and hedge trimmers, can be an effective way to work. When used correctly, they can make our work tasks easier, save time, and can even provide an ergonomic benefit. But along with the positives, there are also safety concerns that come with this equipment.

For all powered equipment, follow these guidelines:

- Never attempt to repair powered equipment while it is turned on. Be sure to either unplug it, or otherwise remove the power source to prevent accidental start-up, when making repairs.
- Never leave powered equipment running while it is unattended and remove any ignition keys.
- Do not refuel with gasoline while the machine is hot. This could lead to explosions or burns.
- Use protective equipment (gloves, ear & eye protection) and wear clothing that covers the arms and legs. Tie back loose, long hair that could get caught. Wear closed-toed shoes.
- Remove debris that could be kicked up as a projectile by the machinery.
- Maintain all guards in place and do not tamper with the equipment to override safety features.

The material in this newsletter should be part of your Injury & Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP).