

2015 Standard Mandatory Training Packet

The objective of this training is to:

- ❖ Review basic information on how to reduce risk and make a safer environment in your workplace
- ❖ Meet annual mandatory training requirements set forth by the federal, state, and county governments

Table of Contents

<u>Tompkins County Compliance Program.....</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Fire Safety.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Bomb Threats.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Right To Know</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Accident/Incident Reporting.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Safety In The Workplace.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Home/Field Visit Safety</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Ergonomic Guidelines.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Body Mechanics.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Body Mechanics/Ergonomic Tips.....</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Cold Weather Safety.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Sun Safety.....</u>	<u>19</u>

TOMPKINS COUNTY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

Quality Integrity Transparency

What's all this Talk about Compliance?

Compliance requirements are nothing new. For example, we have “Workplace Right-to-Know” requirements to ensure appropriate health and safety standards in our work environments. However, *how we demonstrate accountability* to these standards is the current challenge for local governments. Federal and State funding agreements have evolved in the last decade to expand risk management for fraud and abuse, causing local governments to look more closely at how they respond to regulatory compliance requirements and to expect the same from its vendors and grant sub-recipients. The increased need for transparency in our daily operations, coupled with the need to minimize vulnerability, made it necessary for us to review current County practices and then develop an internal control infrastructure that helps to detect and protect against waste, fraud, and abuse.

The results: In February 2011, the County Legislature approved the steps necessary to develop a formal compliance program, desiring a plan that integrates legal and internal compliance efforts throughout county government to mitigate risk, assure quality, and improve internal monitoring systems. The County Compliance Program was developed and successfully set in place within six months of the legislative order. The Program was formally adopted by resolution in August 2011.

What is the Mission of our County Compliance Program?

Our Program mission is to sustain a strong and consistent culture of regulatory and ethical compliance throughout County government by administering a proactive County-wide agenda, integrating best practice that supports all areas of County operations. The Program aims to improve monitoring systems and internal controls that identify and mitigate risk and to demonstrate transparency.

How does an Effective Compliance Program Benefit Our Organization?

- Helps ensure that leadership, employees, operational structures and practices, and technology are working in accord to manage risk.
- Provides a standard for reducing the likelihood of improper or unethical conduct.
- Provides a methodology that encourages employees to actively identify and report potential problems.
- Improves the ability to quickly and accurately respond to operational compliance concerns.
- Creates a proactive (rather than reactive) approach to problem-solving that can potentially save time and resources.

County Compliance Policy

It is the policy of Tompkins County government to comply with all applicable federal, state, local laws, regulations, and policies. It is also the County's policy to adhere to the Code of Ethics (Standards of Conduct) adopted by County Legislature. All employees understand that, while carrying out their duties as county employees, it is their responsibility to report any suspected or known instance of failure to adhere to laws, regulations, and policies.

TOMPKINS COUNTY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

Quality Integrity Transparency

How to Report a Compliance Violation?

If employees witness, learn of, or are asked to participate in any activities that are potentially in violation of federal regulations, state or local laws, or policy, they should contact their Supervisor, Department Head, the County Compliance Officer, or the County Administrator.

Confidential Reports may be made . . .

. . . ***in person*** at the Department of County Administration, 3rd floor, 125 East Court Street, Ithaca, NY;

or

. . . ***by calling*** toll-free: 877-348-1396, a confidential phone line for receiving reports of non-compliance;

or

. . . ***by mailing*** information to the County Compliance Officer, Department of County Administration, 125 East Court Street, 3rd Floor, Ithaca, NY 14850.

The County maintains a Whistleblower Policy and protections (Administrative Policy 01-45) to support the reporting of illegal activities and to protect officers and employees from retaliation who, in good faith, have reported a concern about improper actions. The identity of County employees who report violations of federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or policy will be safeguarded to the fullest extent possible.

QUESTIONS?

No set of policies or procedures can address every decision we make in our daily activities. If you have a question about the right course of conduct, please contact your Supervisor, Manager or Department Head. You may also contact our Corporate Compliance Officer or any member of the County Compliance Committee.

Think Compliance First!

TOMPKINS COUNTY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

Quality Integrity Transparency

How is our County Compliance Program Structured?

The Program includes the following Eight Elements:

1. Written policies, including Code of Ethics, and procedures for reporting actual or suspected non-compliance.
2. Designated County Compliance Officer and County Compliance Committee.
3. Compliance training for all county staff, including elected officials and orientation for new governing body members.
4. Communications lines to Compliance Officer, including anonymous and confidential reporting.
5. Documented disciplinary procedures.
6. Routine identification of compliance risk areas, including internal audit and appropriate external audit.
7. System for responding to compliance issues, correcting such problems promptly, and documenting appropriately.
8. Whistleblower/non-retaliation protections (see Administrative Policy #01-45).

How is the County Compliance Program Administered?

Currently, the Deputy County Administrator serves as the County Compliance Officer, overseeing program implementation and assisting the County Administrator with internal investigations and corrective actions on issues related to noncompliance or compliance-related risk.

There is also a nine-member County Compliance Committee appointed by the County Administrator and chaired by the Compliance Officer. The Committee helps administer the Compliance Program, assisting with updates and enhancements, staff training and outreach, and working with departments in addressing specific risk areas. The Committee includes the County Attorney, County Finance Director, Personnel Commissioner, Commissioner of Social Services, Mental Health Commissioner, Public Health Director, Director of Information Technology Services, and the Healthcare Security and Privacy Officer.

What's the Role of County Staff?

Our County Compliance Program represents a corporate philosophy and strategy for ensuring quality operations that meet various regulatory requirements. Demonstrating compliance is not a one-time event; it is an ongoing responsibility of every County employee:

1. Review the Compliance Program Document and the information provided on the Compliance Program Web Page. (Look for the link found at the lower right corner of the County home page.)
2. Hold/attend annual County Compliance Program training in your department.
3. Stay abreast of compliance requirements specific to your department operations.
4. Conduct routine risk assessments of department procedures and practices, seeking ways to minimize vulnerability.
5. Report anything that doesn't seem quite right: 1-877-348-1396.
6. Refuse to participate in any wrongful course of action that violates federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or policy.



TOMPKINS COUNTY FIRE SAFETY

FIRE PREVENTION IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

The Emergency Evacuation/Action Plan – policy is available with any of the following Department Safety Coordinators.

Department

Health Department - Brenda Grinnel-Crosby

Downtown Departments - Jackie Kippola / Jackie Thomas

Airport - Tony Rudy

Solid Waste - Paul Cowles

Facilities - Barb O'Brien, Alan Lockett

Highway - Jerry Stern

Emergency Response - Chis Strizack

Mental Health - Barb Davieds

Sheriff's Office - CO Barrett/CO Rainbow

Probation – Karla Bracket

DSS - Kit Kephart



All employees, students, interns and volunteers need annual orientation to the **Emergency Evacuation/Action Plan** (Plan) so they know what to do in case of a fire alarm or bomb threat.

All employees are responsible to –

- Be familiar with their department's/building's written Emergency Evacuation Plan,
- Know the location of their designated and alternate fire exits, alarms and extinguishers,
- Keep their work area clutter free, keep flammable items away from heating units and keep an 18" clearance around sprinklers,
- Check electrical equipment before using. Check for torn or frayed cords, tape on cords or broken plugs and if it looks unsafe, don't use it and report it to your supervisor,
- Unplug equipment by pulling on the plug, not the cord, use UL approved power strips for equipment and do not overload outlets or power strips.

Fire Safety Directors are responsible to –

- Conduct bi-annual fire and evacuation drills,
- In event of a fire alarm, assume responsibilities as person in charge until Fire Department arrives,
- Coordinate reports on the condition of the fire if known and status of evacuation to Fire Department,
- Assign FFO's as door monitors during evacuations to ensure clients and staff do not enter the building during an emergency evacuation, and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the response, follow-up and communicate with appropriate persons/departments for any required improvements.

Tompkins County Bomb Threat Procedures

Review the **YELLOW Bomb Threat Procedure** information and keep the card under or near the phone.

If you should receive a bomb threat via –

Telephone – Do not hang up, even if the caller does

- Get a co-worker's attention and ask them to **call 911**
- Remain calm and polite. Keep the caller on the line as long as possible
- Listen carefully to the caller's voice and background sounds and exact words
- Ask questions listed on the card such as where the bomb is and when it will go off
- If the phone has a display, copy the information
- Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist on back of yellow card immediately

Email – Follow your departmental procedures– Do not delete the message

Written Note – Follow your departmental procedures – Handle note as minimally as possible

If you receive a suspicious package – Follow your departmental procedures which should include:

- Isolate package
- Who to report it to
- Involve authorities if necessary
- Using PPE when handling

Signs of a suspicious package include –

- No return address, excessive postage, stains
- Strange odor or sounds, unexpected delivery
- Poorly handwritten, misspelled words, incorrect titles
- Foreign postage, restrictive directions such as "*deliver only to xxxx*"

DO NOT

- Use cell phones or 2 way radio's; radio signals have potential to detonate a bomb
- Evacuate the building until police arrive and evaluate the threat
- Activate the fire alarm
- Touch or move a suspicious package

Tompkins County Right to Know Training

We encounter chemicals almost every day in our personal lives when we fill our vehicles with gasoline, clean our bathrooms or spray insecticides on nearby wasp nests. We know to follow directions and read the labels carefully because many of these chemicals can cause injury or illness if not handled carefully.

How we handle chemicals and protect ourselves in the workplace is governed by the **OSHA Hazard Communications Standard (29 CFR 1900.1200)**. These federal standards are based on a simple concept – that employees have both a need and a right to know the hazards and properties of the chemicals they are exposed to at work. Employees will make knowledgeable decisions and support protective measures such as using safer approved product substitutions, working with engineered improvements, adhering to administrative controls and using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when properly trained.

NYS Public Employees are also protected by the **NYS Right-to-Know (RTK) law**.

Under the NYS RTK law you have the right to –

- Know about hazardous chemicals you use on the job and how to work safely with these chemicals,
- Understand and have available Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for chemicals used in your workplace,
- Request information regarding the name, hazard, proper usage, storage and emergency response for any toxic substance or material used,
- File a complaint with the NYS Department of Labor (315-721-8211),
- Refuse to work with or be exposed to a toxic substance if information requests are not responded to within 72 hours (3 working days excluding weekends and holidays), this right is often referred to as the “72 hour rule”.
- Exercise your rights without fear or discrimination,
- Examine and copy training records which describe training dates, content, employee names in attendance and who conducted the training, contact your supervisor or department safety officer on where to locate the files,
- Examine and copy annual exposure records which specify the name and department name of employees who were employed during any given year.

SDS's are on the county website www.tompkins-co.org/msds/msdsindex.htm. If you are unable to open the SDS sheet, please follow these instructions:

- In Internet Explorer go to Tools and then Compatibility View Setting and add “tompkins-co.org”
- Restart the browser
- Contact ITS if this does not work or if you need assistance

This information may also be reviewed by calling one of the Department Safety Coordinators.

Tompkins County Right to Know Training

Additional Rights – Under OSHA standard 1910.1020 you also have the right to have access to your employee Medical records and Indoor Air Quality test results.

- To access medical records contact the Personnel Department at 274-5526 and ask to speak to the Personnel Commissioner.
- To access any exposure results, such as air monitoring results for chemicals in the workplace, contact the Health & Safety Coordinator at 274-6704.
- You also have the right to speak with or meet with your Department Safety Coordinator or the Health & Safety Coordinator for any questions or concerns.

Chemical labels identify the chemical or material; provide the name, address & emergency phone number of the manufacturer, identify physical and health hazards, special handling instructions, basic PPE recommendations and first aid, fire response and spill clean-up information.

Hazard labels (current format) – The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) uses the following labeling system to identify hazards. Numbers from 0 to 4 indicate 0 (no hazard) to 4 (extreme hazard).

- Blue = Health
- Red = Flammability
- Yellow = Reactivity
- White = Other hazards or special handling



Chemical Labeling (new format) – The United Nations’ Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals include:

- **Product identifier:** how the hazardous chemical is identified. This can be (but is not limited to) the chemical name, code number or batch number. The manufacturer, importer or distributor can decide the appropriate product identifier. The same product identifier must be both on the label and in Section 1 of the SDS (Identification).
- **Signal word:** used to indicate the relative level of severity of hazard and alert the reader to a potential hazard on the label. There are only two signal words, “Danger” and “Warning.” Within a specific hazard class, “Danger” is used for the more severe hazards and “Warning” is used for the less severe hazards. There will only be one signal word on the label no matter how many hazards a chemical may have. If one of the hazards warrants a “Danger” signal word and another warrants the signal word “Warning,” then only “Danger” should appear on the label.
- **Pictogram:** OSHA’s required pictograms must be in the shape of a square set at a point and include a black hazard symbol on a white background with a red frame sufficiently wide enough to be clearly visible. A square red frame set at a point without a hazard symbol is not a pictogram and is not permitted on the label. OSHA has designated eight pictograms under this standard for application to a hazard category.

Tompkins County Right to Know Training

- **Hazard statement(s):** describe the nature of the hazard(s) of a chemical, including, where appropriate, the degree of hazard. For example: “Causes damage to kidneys through prolonged or repeated exposure when absorbed through the skin.” All of the applicable hazard statements must appear on the label. Hazard statements may be combined where appropriate to reduce redundancies and improve readability. The hazard statements are specific to the hazard classification categories, and chemical users should always see the same statement for the same hazards, no matter what the chemical is or who produces it.
- **Precautionary statement(s):** means a phrase that describes recommended measures that should be taken to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous chemical or improper storage or handling.
- **Name, address and phone number of the chemical manufacturer, distributor, or importer**

For additional information on the new labels and SDSs please see OSHA Briefs.

SDS's include the label information and hazardous ingredients, list detailed physical and chemical characteristics, and identify fire, explosive and reactivity properties. SDS **health hazard information** includes routes of entry, exposure levels (PEL or TLV), symptoms of exposure and first-aid emergency information. **Safety information** includes recommendations for PPE, safe handling and storage, how to respond to spills.

Many chemicals have **physical hazards** such as being flammable or explosive, for example when a compressed gas tank is punctured. The chemical may also be reactive such as when a release of dangerous gases may cause an explosion or burn after contact with the air, water or other chemicals.

Chemical exposures are measured by dosage or the amount that can cause illness or death and exposures. These **health hazards** can be minor such as a headache or skin rash or can be acute with immediate or short term affects like a chemical burn. Hazards can also have chronic or long term affects such as cancer from asbestos or cigarettes.

Chemicals enter our bodies through –

- Inhalation – breathing solvent vapors when you open a can of paint
- Ingestion – eating food where chemicals are used or smoking without washing hands
- Skin absorption – vapors and fumes can be absorbed into your body through cuts and open sores or chemicals can penetrate the skin due to injury or be splashed into our eyes.

There can be 3 types of interactions between chemicals. Additive is the effect of 2 chemicals which is equal to the sum of the effect of the two chemicals taken separately, ex: alcohol & depressants. Synergistic is the effect of 2 chemicals taken together which is greater than the sum of their separate effect at the same doses, ex: bleach and ammonia or pesticides & fertilizer. Antagonistic is the effect of 2 chemicals which is actually less than the sum of the effect of the 2 drugs taken independently of each other. This is because the 2nd chemical increases the excretion of the 1st or may directly block its toxic actions. Antagonism forms the basis for poison antidotes.

How much is too much exposure? A number of different measuring means have been developed to try and explain harmful levels; two important measures are TLV and PEL. These measures will be listed on SDS's for some of the chemicals used in the county. **Threshold Limit Values (TLV)** are not law but guides to exposure levels. A TLV may be a Time Weighted Average of 8 hours of exposure that should not be exceeded or it may be a Short Term Exposure Limit such as 15 minutes that should not be exceeded, or a Ceiling that should never be exceeded at any time.

Tompkins County Right to Know Training

Permissible Exposure Limits (PEL) is a measure of airborne concentration of material to which nearly all workers can be exposed day after day without adverse health effects.

Despite these measures, specified safe limits are not guaranteed safe because certain individuals have sensitivities and allergies that cause them to have reactions well below the established TLV.

Personal Protective Equipment on the job may include dust masks and respirators, glasses, goggles and face shields, hearing protection, gloves, foot protection, head protection and aprons or full-body suits. The PPE you use is determined by the chemical type and SDS recommendations.

Some examples of toxic chemicals found in your work areas include:

- Toner hazards include carcinogens, irritants and vapors which may be inhaled, absorbed or ingested.
- Solvents such as cleaning supplies or Whiteout may be corrosives, irritants or vapors which can be inhaled, absorbed or ingested.
- Asbestos in older buildings is a carcinogen and an irritant which can be inhaled, absorbed or ingested, and
- Known sensitizers such as latex and formaldehyde or suspected sensitizers such as NCR forms, perfumes and fiberglass. All of these could be inhaled or absorbed.

County employees can protect themselves with the following safety measures –

- Use ventilation. Open the window or turn on exhaust system.
- Use protective creams and gloves as per the Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- Use other appropriate PPE specified on labels and SDS.
- Know the incompatibilities of chemicals that cannot be stored near each other or used together such as bleach and ammonia.
- Do not smoke or eat around chemicals.
- Always wash exposed body parts after using chemicals.
- Follow all other safety measures on labels and SDS.

Employees must know what toxic chemicals are found in their work areas.

Toxic substances to which the Office employee may be exposed:

CATEGORY	ROUTE OF ENTRY	HAZARD
1. Toners	Inhalation / Absorption / Ingestion	Carcinogen / Irritant / Vapor
2. Solvents - Cleaning Supplies - Whiteout - Maintenance Supplies	Inhalation / Absorption / Ingestion	Corrosive / Irritant / Vapor
3. Asbestos – In older buildings	Inhalation / Absorption / Ingestion	Carcinogen / Irritant
4. Sensitizers Latex (Known) Formaldehyde (Known) NCR Forms (Suspected) Perfumes (Suspected) Fiberglass (Suspected)	Inhalation / Absorption	
5. Gasoline / Diesel	Inhalation / Absorption	

Tompkins County Accident/Incident Reporting



Prevention of slips, trips and falls –

- ~ 15% of all workplace injuries in the country are from fall related accidents, in most cases, these incidents might have been prevented.
- A majority of falls occur on the same level surface (60%) resulting in slips and trips. The remaining 40% of falls occur from a height.
- Slips happen when there is too little friction or traction between the footwear and the walking surface.
- Trips happen when your foot collides (strikes or hits) an object causing you to lose your balance and fall. Common causes include an obstructed view, poor lighting, clutter/boxes, open file drawers or uneven walking surfaces.

A few ways you can prevent accidents –

- Clean spills immediately, remove obstacles from walkways and keep your work area free of clutter
- Always close file or desk drawers
- Cover cables that cross walkways and keep work areas and walkways well lit
- Wear proper fitting footwear to increase comfort and prevent fatigue which, in turn, improves your safety. Choose the safest footwear for each work situation.
- Take your time and be mindful of where you are going
- Make wide turns at corners
- Ensure that things you are carrying or pushing do not prevent you from seeing any obstructions or spills.

What should you do when an accident/incident happens?

- Assist as able to care for the person who is injured and/or seek help.
- Notify your supervisor as soon as possible.
- If equipment or supplies that a person is using are defective, do not throw them away, save all the pieces and wrapping. Contact the supervisor as soon as possible.
- Look for events/situations that may have caused the accident/incident (wet floor, poor lighting, torn carpet, broken tiles, dizziness, etc.)
- Complete an accident/incident report and return to your supervisor within 24 business hours or immediately if personal injury is involved. For an auto accident with a County car, complete the blue form that is located in the glove box.
- Incident Reports should include information on the 'Who, What, Where, When, Why & How.'

Tompkins County Safety In The Workplace



The Tompkins County Workplace Violence Work plan is available via the employee Intranet at

http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/files/Workplace%20Violence%20Prevention%20Plan%20Edited%206.9.2015_0.pdf

Each department has had an initial workplace evaluation to determine the factors or situations that might place employees at risk. These department specific factors or situations are important for your safety. If you have not been informed of them please contact your supervisor.

An annual evaluation will be conducted for each Department. If you have any specific concerns please notify your Department Head or Department Safety Coordinator.

Signs of impending aggression include:

- Threatening body language, reddening or darkening of the face, clenched fists,
- Agitation, yelling, use of profanity
- Making threatening statements.

If you sense a person is becoming aggressive –

- Try to defuse the situation by maintaining a calm and non-threatening demeanor. Listen, show empathy, maintain eye contact, state only the facts and keep a safe distance.
- If in an office and/or clinic setting, attempt to isolate the individual, instruct another individual to direct others to a safe area and contact your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Alert other staff if you become uneasy around a client or visitor.
- **Do not** ignore your gut feelings.

Tompkins County

Home/Field Visit Safety

In the home setting:

- If you have safety concerns prior to a visit, speak with your supervisor before you go to determine if, when and how the visit will be conducted. If the visit is essential, check with your supervisor to determine if a law enforcement escort is appropriate.
- Park your vehicle with the front facing the driveway or road exit when possible.
- If you have a cellular phone, make sure it is charged and available.
- In a questionable situation, stay close to the exit with your back to the door.
- If a situation becomes or threatens to become violent in a home setting, leave the area immediately. Do not concern yourself with personal belongings or work. Once in a safe location, contact supervisor and law enforcement.
- If any other personnel are scheduled to visit this patient, these staff must be contacted and instructed to postpone the visit until further notice.

In the community setting:

- Always be aware of your surroundings, and walk with purpose.
- If you are in danger in a public area, scream 'FIRE' – not 'HELP'. People are more likely to respond to a cry for fire than for a cry for help.
- At all costs, avoid letting an attacker take you to another place, such as a car or alley. Try to stay or move into a place with as many people as possible.
- Run 'what if' scenarios through your head. Rehearsing your response may help you react more swiftly.

Tompkins County Ergonomic Guidelines

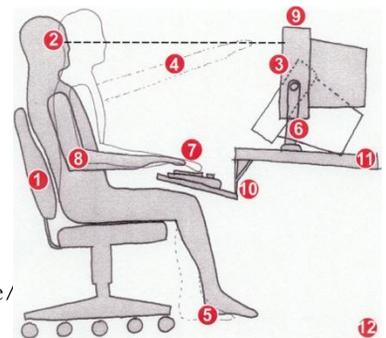
Information from CUergo – Cornell University Ergonomics Web

10 Steps to help you decide on a good ergonomic design

1. How will the computer be used - for one or more persons?
2. What kind of computer will be used: desktop or laptop?
3. What furniture will be used - for writing or for computer use or for both writing and computer use
4. What chair will be used - lumbar support, armrests, etc
5. What type of work will the computer be used for - word processing, graphic design, data entry, games
6. What can you see - monitor, paper documents etc
7. Posture, posture, posture!
8. Keep items most often used closest to you so they can be conveniently and comfortably reached
9. A good workstation ergonomic arrangement
10. Where will the computer be used - lighting, ventilation, noise, take a break

12 Tips for an Ergonomic Computer Workstation

- use a good chair with a dynamic chair back and sit back in it
- top of monitor casing 2-3" (5-8 cm) above eye level
- no glare on screen, use an optical glass anti-glare filter where needed
- Sit at arms length from monitor
- feet on floor or stable footrest
- use a document holder, preferably in-line with the computer screen
- wrists flat and straight in relation to forearms to use keyboard/mouse/
- arms and elbows relaxed close to body
- center monitor and keyboard in front of you
- use a negative tilt keyboard tray with an upper mouse platform or downward tilt-able platform adjacent to keyboard
- use a stable work surface and stable (no bounce) keyboard tray
- take frequent short breaks (micro-breaks)



Information on this page was compiled by the DEA651 class of 2000 - Bethany Johnson; Emily Kuperstein; Mari Mitchell; Heidi Tinnes; with Garrick Goh (TA) and Professor Alan Hedge

For more detailed guidance see the [Ergonomic Guidelines for arranging a Computer Workstation](#)

Tompkins County Body Mechanics

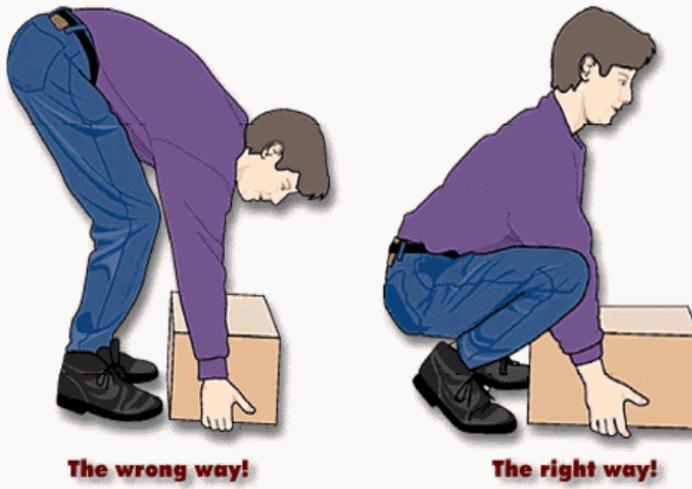
Steps to prevent injury

Always think about what could happen

Stretch throughout the day

When lifting –

- Assess the load.....Keep the load close to your body
- Remove all obstacles.....Lift with your legs
- Place feet shoulder width apart.....Don't twist or reach
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.....Get help when needed



When turning with a load, pivot instead of twisting, move the shoulders, hips and feet with the load in front at all times.

Many potentially harmful situations that can lead to back injury can be identified and avoided by following four basic rules of thumb.

- *Prolonged static posture* is not healthy. The healthy body can only tolerate staying in one position for about 20 minutes. That is why sitting on an airplane, at a desk in an office chair, or at a movie theatre becomes uncomfortable after a short time. Standing in one place, such as standing on a concrete floor for extended periods of time tends to cause back pain. Holding the same position slowly diminishes elasticity in the soft tissues (muscles ligaments and tendons in the back). Then, stress builds up and causes back discomfort and/or leg discomfort. The solution is simple. Whether you're sitting in an office chair or standing in a line, change positions frequently. Just move. Stand or sit, stretch, take a short walk. After returning to the standing or sitting posture, use an alternate posture for just a few moments and some of the tissue elasticity needed to protect the joints will return.

Tompkins County

Body Mechanics/Ergonomic Tips

- *Frequent or repetitive stretching* to the end range of motion or awkward, angled postures can bind the joints. Unlike jobs that require long-term seating in an office chair, jobs that require frequent repetitive motion can cause great discomfort.
- *Heavy loads offer greater risk.* If the job requires moving heavy or bulky objects, it is important to have the proper tools or get help.
- *Fatigue* can make people move more awkwardly. If one is overtired or feels fatigued, it is advisable to avoid lifting heavy objects alone or too quickly.
- **Take a break!** All Ergonomists agree that it's a good idea to take frequent, brief rest breaks: Practice the following:
 - **Eye breaks** - looking at a computer screen for a while causes some changes in how the eyes work, causes you to blink less often, and exposes more of the eye surface to the air. Every 15 minutes you should briefly look away from the screen for a minute or two to a more distant scene, preferably something more than 20 feet away. This lets the muscles inside the eye relax. Also, blink your eyes rapidly for a few seconds. This refreshes the tear film and clears dust from the eye surface.
 - **Micro-breaks** - most typing is done in bursts rather than continuously. Between these bursts of activity you should rest your hands in a relaxed, flat, straight posture. During a micro-break (< 2minutes) you can briefly stretch, stand up, move around, or do a different work task e.g. make a phone call). A micro-break isn't necessarily a break from work, but it's a break from the use of a particular set of muscles that's doing most of the work (e.g. the finger flexors if you're doing a lot of typing).
 - **Rest breaks** - every 30 to 60 minutes you should take a brief rest break. During this break stand up, move around and do something else. Go and get a drink of water, soda, tea, coffee or whatever. This allows you to rest and exercise different muscles and you'll feel less tired.
 - **Exercise breaks** - there are many stretching and gentle exercises that you can do to help relieve muscle fatigue. You should do these every 1-2 hours.
 - **Ergonomic software** - working at a computer can be hypnotic, and often you don't realize how long you've been working and how much you've been typing and mousing. You can get excellent ergonomic software that you can install on your computer. The best software will run in the background and it will monitor how much you've been using the computer. It will prompt you to take a rest break at appropriate intervals, and it will suggest simple exercises.

All done!

Please complete answers on Answer Sheet and turn it into your Supervisor or Department Safety Coordinator

Tompkins County

Cold Weather Safety

What is your risk from working in cold weather?

Cold stress or hypothermia can affect employees who are not sufficiently protected against cold. The cold may result naturally from weather conditions or be created artificially, as in refrigerated environments.

Cold is a physical hazard in many outdoor workplaces. When the body is unable to warm itself, serious cold-related illnesses and injuries may occur that could lead to permanent tissue damage or worse.

Typical workplaces that are prone to cold, wet and/or windy conditions include: roofs; open or unheated cabs; bridges or other projects near large bodies of water; large steel structures that retain cold or are exposed to cold; high buildings open to the wind; and refrigerated rooms, vessels, and containers.

Your body tries to maintain an internal (core) temperature of approximately 98.6°F (37°C) by reducing heat loss and increasing heat production. Under cold conditions, blood vessels in skin, arms and legs constrict, decreasing blood flow to extremities. This minimizes cooling of the blood and keeps critical internal organs warm. At very low temperatures, however, reducing blood flow to the extremities can result in lower skin temperature and higher risk of frostbite.

What other RISK FACTORS are associated with cold injury?

Various medical conditions such as heart disease, asthma/bronchitis, diabetes and vibration/white finger disease can increase the risk of cold injury. Check with your health practitioner to learn whether medications you are taking could also have adverse effects in a cold environment.

How do you protect against cold-related risks?

The best protection against cold-related health risks is to be aware and be prepared. Workers should recognize the signs and symptoms of overexposure to cold in both themselves and other co-workers. Pain in the extremities may be the first warning sign. Any worker shivering severely should come in out of the cold.

General Employee Protective Measures in cold weather:

- Ensure that wind-chill factor is understood by workers, especially those working on bridges or out in the open on high buildings.
- Ensure that workers are medically fit to work in excessive cold, especially those subject to the risk factors highlighted above.
- Make sure that workers understand the importance of high-caloric foods when working in cold environments. Warm sweet drinks and soups will serve to maintain caloric intake and fluid volume. Coffee should be discouraged in cold conditions because it increases water loss and blood flow to extremities.
- Personnel working in isolated cold environments, whether indoors or outdoors, should have backup for monitoring purposes. Also, if applicable, employees should use shelters or other protected areas at regular intervals.
- Warm drinks and regular breaks are beneficial under extremely cold working conditions.

Select protective clothing to suit the cold, the job, and the level of physical activity.

- Wear several layers of clothing rather than one thick layer. Air captured between layers acts as an insulator.
- Wear synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene next to the skin because these whisk away sweat. Clothing should not restrict flexibility.
- If conditions are wet as well as cold, ensure that the outer clothing worn is waterproof or at least water-repellent. Wind resistant fabrics may also be required under some conditions.
- At air temperatures of 2°C (35.6°F) or less, workers whose clothing gets wet for any reason will need an immediate change of clothing and may need treatment from hypothermia.

Tompkins County Sun Safety

What is the New York State Public Employee Sun Safety Law?

The “New York State Public Employee Sun Safety Law” was enacted on August 18, 2006 as an amendment to Section 218-a of the New York State Labor Law. The law requires **New York State public employers to provide sun safety** information to **state employees who spend more than a total of 5 hours per week outdoors**.

What is your risk from exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (UV) from the Sun?

Employees who work outside in the sun are more at risk to skin exposures that may include blemishes, sun freckles and wrinkles. Continued exposure to sun over time can cause damaged skin to become cancerous.

How can you reduce your risk to UV exposure?

The easiest way to reduce UV risk is to reduce your direct exposure to the sun. You can do this by wearing protective clothing, such as a brim hat, long pants and long sleeved shirt. You can also use protective sunscreens. Use a sunscreen with a SPF (skin protection factor) of at least 15, and also one that is water-resistant, so it can withstand humidity and sweat. Avoid products such as baby oil, cocoa butter or skin oils which do not protect against sunburn. In addition to reducing your exposure, examine yourself regularly. Check your skin for danger signs, including any wound, sore or patch of skin that won't heal or constantly scales or any growing lump, particularly if it is brown or bluish in color. Also check for moles that grow, or change shape or color. If anything looks suspicious get a medical opinion - sooner rather than later. Also advise your employer of any sun related condition or medical diagnosis.

Protecting Yourself in the Sun

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure and whether the skin is protected. *There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans.*

Skin Cancer Self-Examination

It's important to examine your body monthly because skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured. The Most important warning sign is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape or color during a period of 1 month to 1 or 2 years.

Skin cancers often take the following forms:

- Pale, wax-like, pearly nodules.
- Red, scaly, sharply outlined patches.
- Sores that don't heal.
- Small, mole-like growths—melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer.
- If you find such unusual skin changes, see a health care professional immediately.

All Done!

Please complete answers on Answer Sheet and turn it into your Supervisor or Department Safety Coordinator