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WORKING FROM HOME REMINDERS

For most of us the past several months have been both unsettling and challenging. We have been taken out of our familiar work environment and placed in a familiar home environment to do our daily jobs. We have transitioned from one area of defined responsibility (the office) to another area of defined responsibility (our homes) necessitated by COVID-19. Complacency becomes the enemy of safety so it is imperative that while working from home we do not become complacent. To combat complacency while working at home and to heighten our safety awareness please follow these work at home recommendations:

- Whenever possible, begin and finish at the same time every day you are working at home. Have a beginning and end of day ritual. Since there is no longer a 'break' between waking up and going to work, some teleworkers find it helpful to actually leave the house and walk around the block before starting work. You may want to end the day the same way. This simple action takes the place of your commute, allowing you time to plan your day and decompress from the events of your day.
- Since many of us are working from makeshift areas in our homes that have been retrofitted as work offices make sure to follow established office safety practices. Don't overlook the basics:
 - ◆ Ensure all equipment is stable so there is no tipping
 - ◆ Maintain proper walk ways
 - ◆ Don't overload electrical outlets
 - ◆ Inspect all electrical plugs, cords, devices for integrity; replace any frayed or damaged plugs, cords or devices
 - ◆ Keep electrical cords tucked out of the line of traffic and secured to avoid trip and fall accidents
 - ◆ Keep all liquids away from electrical equipment and sources of electricity
 - ◆ Maintain proper lighting for the work being done; reduce glare as much as possible
 - ◆ Adhere to proper lifting standards by lifting with your legs and not your back
 - ◆ Keep your work area neat and orderly
 - ◆ Take adequate stretch breaks
 - ◆ Inspect your work area daily to ensure that you are maintaining proper safety standards
- To avoid musculoskeletal injuries, follow ergonomic rules in your home office:
 - ◆ Arrange your workstation to be comfortable without any unnecessary strain on the back, neck and arms.
 - ◆ Maintain proper posture at all times – back straight, knees bent and feet touching the floor
 - ◆ Keep all frequently used desk items within easy reach, generally with the elbows close to the body. Items used occasionally can be at nearly full arm reach.
 - ◆ Follow the 20-20-20 rule to protect your eyes: after working 20 minutes, take a 20 second break to focus on something at least 20 feet away.
 - ◆ Take frequent walking mini-breaks so that you change position and avoid excess stress on the muscles. If you can, set your printer up in another room so that when you print a document you need to move from your desk, take a short walk and retrieve your documents and then return to your workspace (it is beneficial if you do not need to pass the refrigerator during these mini-walks!).

Maintaining the above safety guidelines will reduce the potential for injury while working at home. Remember that safety always starts with you and your attitude! Stay safe!

News & Notes

STAY AT HOME ORDERS, TRAFFIC AND AIR POLLUTION

Traffic accidents are down dramatically as people stay at home

It might not be safe to hug a stranger, but driving on freeways is safer than ever. All over major U.S. cities traffic is down, pollution is down, accidents are down.

According to a study by the University of California, Davis, California traffic accidents have fallen by 50 percent since March 19, when the populace was ordered to stay at home.

Typically there are 1,000 collisions and 400 accidents that result in injuries or fatalities every day on the congested freeways of California. Now the numbers are 500 collisions and 200 injury/fatality accidents.

The study measured these highways: I-5, both north of Los Angeles and toward Oceanside, U.S. Route 101, U.S. Route 99, state road 152 toward Los Banos and I-280 toward Daly City.

Pollution is also down worldwide. A Stanford scientist studied satellite imagery and found a dramatic decline in air pollution. Marshall Burke, assistant professor in the Stanford department of Earth System Science, predicted that quarantine might save 77,000 lives in China.

In Los Angeles, as April began, residents were enjoying their fourth week of smog-free air. In fact, the air is clearer from Los Angeles to India, which has 21 of the world's 30 most polluted cities. Additionally, in major cities in India, something new is in the sky: blue. Living with such badly polluted air makes dwellers in such cities uniquely at risk for viruses like Covid-19.

However, scientists say with the resumption of factory work and traffic, blue skies will once again be replaced with gray.



"Same old, same old. Knocking things off my desk, walking across the keyboard..."

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

- 1) When is Luke Skywalker's birthday?
- 2) If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring?
- 3) This thing can turn without ever moving. What is it?
- 4) What is the shortest month?
- 5) When the horse strokes the cat, the wood begins to sing. What is it?

Answers on Page 2

PROPER LIFTING TECHNIQUES

A leading cause of back injury at work is lifting or handling objects incorrectly.

Learning and following the correct method for lifting and handling heavy loads can help prevent injury and avoid back pain. Check out these safe lifting and handling tips.

Think before you lift

Plan the lift. Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Is there equipment you could use, such as a hoist, that could help with the lift?

Remove obstructions, such as discarded wrapping materials. For long lifts, such as from floor to shoulder height, consider resting the load midway on a table or bench to change your grip on it.

Always test the load before you lift

If you can move the load by pushing it with one foot it should be safe for you to lift, if you lift it properly. If it cannot be moved with one foot then you should not attempt to lift it yourself but should get help with the load.

Keep the load close to the waist

Keep the load close to the waist for as long as possible while lifting to reduce the amount of pressure on the back.

Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If closely approaching the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before trying to lift it.

Adopt a stable position

Your feet should be apart with 1 leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it's on the ground).

Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain a stable posture. Wearing over-tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, such as high heels or flip flops, may make this difficult.

Ensure a good hold on the load

Where possible, hug the load close to the body. This should help you make a stronger and more solid lift than gripping the load tightly with the hands only.

Do not bend your back when lifting

A slight bending of the back, hips and knees at the start of the lift is preferable to either fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees – in other words, fully squatting.



Do not bend the back any further while lifting

This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.

Do not twist when you lift

Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent. Keep your shoulders level and facing the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving your feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

Look ahead

Keep your head up when handling the load. Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

Move smoothly

Do not jerk or snatch the load as this can make it harder to keep control and increases the risk of injury.

Know your limits

Do not lift or handle more than you can easily manage. There's a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If you're in doubt, seek advice or get help.

Lower down, then adjust

Put the load down and then adjust. If you need to position the load precisely, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.

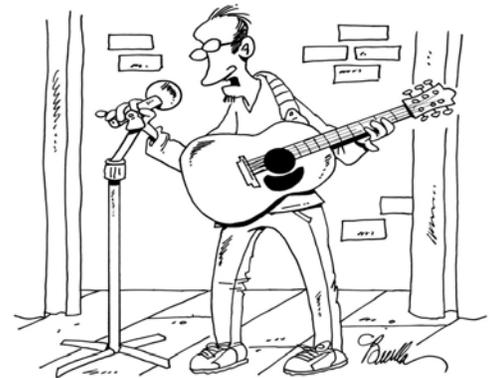
SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Have you ever cut yourself and wondered whether you should see the doctor?

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, see your doctor for:

1. Any injury that spurts blood or continues to bleed after 10 minutes of firm, direct pressure.
2. Wounds that are inflamed and tender or emit pus, or if the area around the cut feels numb or develops streaks.
3. For deep cuts and puncture wounds, especially on the hands and feet.
4. For lacerations with jagged, rough, or gaping edges that can't be drawn together with surgical tape.
5. For a very large cut.
6. Any cut on the face should get professional attention to minimize scarring.
7. Cuts with embedded dirt that won't come out with soap and water need a doctor's cleaning.
8. Fishhook injuries. If the hook is stuck, don't try to take it out yourself.
9. See a doctor if you have a fever over 100 degrees after being injured.
10. If it has been more than 10 years since you had a tetanus shot or booster shot, see your doctor.

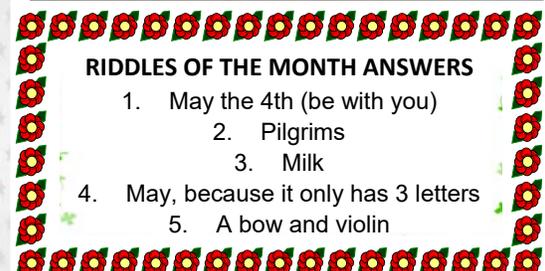
ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...



"Here's a blues number written about my inability to remember computer passwords."

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies."
George R. R. Martin



RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

1. May the 4th (be with you)
2. Pilgrims
3. Milk
4. May, because it only has 3 letters
5. A bow and violin