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SAFETY TIPS FOR RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

Since many of us have been working from home for the last several months the ability to return to the office environment may be greeted with a vast range of emotions, depending on each individual's situation. Bearing that in mind, there are some specific do's and don'ts each of us should be aware of upon returning to work. Therefore the following safety tips are offered to help facilitate a safe return to the workplace:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Follow the policies and procedures of your agency related to illness, cleaning and disinfecting, work meetings and travel. Continue to follow guidelines from state authorities for using face coverings in public spaces.
- Avoid touching common surfaces with your bare hands. Use a paper towel instead and properly dispose of the paper towel when you have finished touching the area you need to touch.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in your work area, including keyboards, phones, handrails and doorknobs. Instructions for properly cleaning and disinfecting your immediate area can be found on the Centers for Disease Control website at <https://www.cdc.gov>
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Inform your supervisor if you have a sick family member at home with COVID-19.
- Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use. This recommendation applies to all common areas also.
- Social distancing should be maintained in all areas of the workplace including elevators, breakrooms, bathrooms and other common areas.
- Know what to expect of yourself. You may experience a variety of emotions after returning to work, which is normal. Talking about your feelings with someone you trust is a healthy way to process this evolving situation.
- Continue to take care of yourself. Eat well, get plenty of rest and exercise, spend time with those closest to you.
- Take care of your children and your family. Parents could be concerned about their children's well-being when they must return to work. Make sure your children know proper hygiene practices and let them talk about what is going on to help reassure them.
- Seek help if you need to. If your feelings are too much to bear, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Mental health problems—in general and in response to a major event such as the pandemic—are real, diagnosable and treatable. The State of Delaware provides an Employee Assistance Program for its employees; you may contact EAP at 1-800-343-2186.
- For COVID-19-related guidance that has been given for your specific situation visit the CDC website and the State of Delaware's Corona Virus website (<https://coronavirus.delaware.gov>). Stay healthy and safe!

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

- 1) Why don't mummies go on summer vacation?
 - 2) Why don't basketball players go on summer vacation?
 - 3) What did the bread do on its summer break?
 - 4) What is brown, hairy and wears sunglasses?
 - 5) What happens when a dog stands in the hot sun for too long?
 - 6) What do bears use to cool their homes on a hot summer day?
- Answers on Page 2 "RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS"

News & Notes

BACK TO WORK?

How to navigate, disinfect your work day

NOTE: This article contains information derived from a National Institutes of Health 2020 study on virus aerosol and surface persistence.

Each worker will want to routinely disinfect work spaces for at least two months (and maybe more if there is another outbreak of coronavirus in the fall).

Surface exposure

*Wear gloves on public transportation or if you are lingering in high-traffic, public areas.

*Keep tissues on your desk, to help yourself and others stop the spread through sneezing and coughing.

*Carry tissues with you to open doors, push buttons, and turn handles in public areas. In a pinch, use your sleeve or even your elbow.

*Disinfecting wipes help disinfect your desk, but be sure they are wet and not dried out.

*Consider changing into clean clothes when you get home from work, especially if you have been to any public places. Wash clothes in at least 86 degree water with soap. Load washers lightly to increase the disinfecting effect. Bleach and non-chlorine bleach help, if acceptable for the fabrics. High-heat dryers are also good.

*Drying clothes outside might help as some studies say ultraviolet light has disinfecting properties.

*In break rooms, wash ceramic cups in soap and hot water after using. Consider carrying your cup to your desk or work area, rather than leaving it in the break room.

Surface contamination

*The Covid-19 virus is still too new for comprehensive studies on how long it persists on some surfaces. However, similar corona viruses remain infectious on some surfaces for up to nine days at room temperature. Low temperatures and high humidity tend to increase persistence.

Hard surfaces

*In quantities large enough to be transmittable, the Covid-19 virus can exist on stainless steel and plastic surfaces for 72 hours.

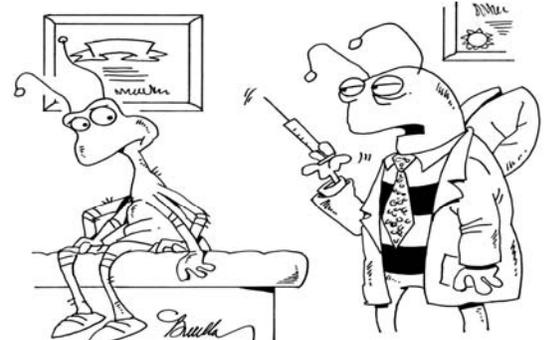
*Copper is known to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses and this was shown in a 2015 study by the University of South Hampton.

*Current studies show Covid-19 can exist on copper for only 4 hours.

*On cardboard, the virus lingers for about 24 hours, suggesting that delivered packages should be safe.

Fabrics

*Viruses do stay on fabric, but just how long seems to be unknown and was not covered in the NIH study. One study found that wool, cotton, and other natural fabrics contain more bacteria compared to synthetics and silks. But no study has yet proved how long viruses live on fabric.



"This will sting a bit."

LADDER SAFETY

A Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) report on ladder safety showed some startling statistics concerning the frequency and severity of ladder-related accidents in the United States. Every year thousands of people are injured and hundreds are killed. By understanding the causes of ladder accidents the vast majority could be prevented.

- More than **90,000 people receive emergency room treatment** from ladder-related injuries every year
- Elevated falls account for almost **700 occupational deaths** annually
- These deaths account for 15% of all occupational deaths
- OSHA believes 100% of all ladder accidents could be prevented if proper attention to equipment and climber training were provided
- Over the last 10 years the amount of ladder-related injuries has increased 50%
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 50% of all ladder-related **accidents were due to individuals carrying items as they climbed**
- The most common type of ladder-related injury, with 32%, is fractures.

4 MAIN TYPES OF LADDER ACCIDENTS

Ladder accidents are extremely common even though they are entirely preventable. Ladder accidents can come from a wide variety of issues but the following four causes account for the vast majority. If these simple loss prevention tips for each cause are followed, ladder accidents could almost be eliminated.

1. Selecting the Wrong Type of Ladder

Like most other jobs, choosing the right tool can make all the difference when it comes to safety and this is the same for ladders. One thing to consider when selecting an appropriate ladder is the ladder's weight capacity. Each ladder is designed to support a maximum weight limit and if the climber exceeds that limit the ladder could break and cause the user to fall or become injured.

Another consideration when selecting the appropriate ladder for a job is the necessary height of the ladder. Many injuries occur due to ladders being too short for a specific task, and instead of selecting a new ladder for the job, workers will place the ladder on something to extend its reach or will stand on the top rung to gain the necessary height. Both scenarios are extremely dangerous and can result in serious injuries.

2. Using Worn or Damaged Ladders

Another common contributing factor to ladder accidents is the use of old, worn, or damaged ladders. Like everything else, ladders have a shelf life; after a couple of years the stress of being climbed up and down on causes ladders to break down. Damaged ladders are extremely dangerous as they can easily break while being used and cause serious injuries.

To protect yourself from damaged or broken ladders, make sure to thoroughly inspect each ladder before using it. If any damage is found, do not use the ladder until it has been safely repaired to the manufacturer's specifications or it has been replaced.

3. Incorrect Use of Ladders

Human error is by far the leading cause of ladder accidents. Never use a ladder in any other way than what the manufacturer intended it to be used for. Also, do not lengthen or alter a ladder in any way.

While using a ladder **always maintain 3 points of contact** with the ladder to ensure stability. Also, never attempt to reach for something while on the ladder. It is much safer to get off the ladder, move it, and then climb back up.

4. Incorrect Placement of Ladders

Make sure that when positioning a ladder, the ground you place it on is level and firm. Ladders should never be placed in front of a door that is not locked, blocked, or guarded.

A good practice to ensure a ladder is secure is to always have a helper support the base while a ladder is being used. If the ladder can not be held by someone else, make sure it has an appropriate foot to prevent it from slipping. The feet of the ladder can be staked if you are using a ladder outside and no one is available to support the feet of the ladder.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

June is National Safety Month. With the stay-at-home orders most of us have been driving our vehicles infrequently. Therefore, as things begin a return to a "new" normal remember these safe driving practices:

- Check tires, lights, horn, and brakes of your vehicles before driving; repair or replace items as needed.
- Wear safety belts to prevent being ejected in event of accident.
- Rest as needed – a drowsy driver can be very dangerous.
- Follow vehicle owner's manual for braking techniques (e.g., many manufacturers advise against pumping anti-lock brakes).
- Obey the posted speed limits.
- Count the number of seconds it takes to reach a fixed object which the vehicle in front passed, and then keep at least two seconds of distance behind that vehicle if the road and weather are favorable; maintain more time if they are not.
- Check blind spots before changing lanes; look over your shoulder and use mirrors frequently
- Stay out of other vehicles' blind spots.
- Pull over to side of road when making or receiving a phone call, texting, or using any electronic device.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...



"If I apply for early Social Security, I get this. If I wait until I only have one life left, I get this."

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

Life is about
change, sometimes
it's painful, sometimes
it's beautiful, but
most of the time
it's both.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

1. They are afraid to relax and unwind.
2. They get called for traveling.
3. It loafed around.
4. A coconut on summer vacation.
5. The dog becomes a hotdog.
6. They use bear conditioning.

