

Help Workers Keep Their COOL

Heat stress is a silent hazard. Many times workers don't realize they're suffering from the condition, until it's well advanced. In response to worker deaths attributed to heat stress, Section 3395 was added to California's existing heat illness prevention standard that applies equally to all outdoor places of employment at those times when the environmental risk factors for heat illness are present. The additional section focuses on immediate actions employers and workers can take to prevent heat stress illnesses and fatalities. It includes:

Training – All affected employees, including supervisors, must be provided training on topics such as environmental and personal risk factors for heat illness; procedures for identifying, evaluating, and controlling exposures and risk factors; drinking water; acclimatization; the signs and symptoms of heat illness; and procedures for reporting and responding to heat illness symptoms.

Provision of Water – Workers must have access to potable drinking water, provided in sufficient quantity at the beginning of the work shift that is equal to or greater than one quart per worker per hour for the entire shift. Employers may begin the shift with smaller quantities of water, if they have effective procedures for replenishment during the shift, as

needed, to allow workers to drink one quart or more per hour. Workers should understand the importance of frequent water consumption, know where these fluids are located, and be encouraged to drink about two glasses of water or other non-alcoholic cool drinks before beginning work and after work to replace what may be lost during the work day.



Access to Shade –

Access to shade must be permitted to workers at all times. Workers suffering from heat illness or believing a preventative recovery period is needed must either be provided access to a shaded area open to the air or one with ventilation or cooling, for a period of no less than five minutes.

To safeguard worker health in hot conditions,

supervisors should make it their practice to assess the day's weather, the demands of the job, and the condition of the worker. When possible, heavy work should be scheduled for cooler hours and non-essential tasks postponed for cooler days. Jobs should be rotated with periodic breaks scheduled. And, workers should be encouraged to wear loose-fitting, light-colored, lightweight clothing. The entire heat illness prevention standard can be reviewed at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/HeatIllnessInfo.html>. □

Safely Moving Precious Cargo

Statistics show that many accidents and injuries to agricultural workers occur when they are being transported in vehicles from one location to another. These incidents are usually the result of an unsafe condition of the transport vehicles or the unsafe action of the vehicle driver. Agricultural workers and their employers should be familiar with and abide by all laws regulating farm worker transport vehicles and their drivers.

The law requires that all farm worker transport vehicles be registered with the California State Labor Commissioner, regardless of who owns the vehicle. The transport vehicle must have a certification sticker and a safety inspection sticker issued by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) or risk hefty fines.

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This Agricultural Safety News is produced by the Safety and Health Services Department of State Fund to assist clients in their loss control efforts. Information or recommendations contained in this publication were obtained from sources believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is only advisory and does not presume to be exhaustive or inclusive of all workplace hazards or situations.

Safely Moving Precious Cargo

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Vehicles used for worker transport must be in good operating condition. They're required to have functional steering, working lights and turn signals, brakes, a leak-free fuel system, a horn, door latches, and tires with adequate tread. To provide good visibility, the vehicle must have mirrors (rear-view and side), a clean windshield, and functioning windshield wipers. For good ventilation, the windows should work and the exhaust system should discharge away from passengers. The vehicle's body should be free of openings and rust areas that could cause passenger injury. And, the passenger load should not exceed the vehicle manufacturer's weight rating.

Additionally, the transport vehicle must be equipped with a lap or lap and shoulder seatbelt assembly at each passenger seating position, with all components in good condition. Seatbelts must be vehicle-approved and installed properly, not "improvised." And, passengers may not "share" a seatbelt.

All farm worker transport vehicle drivers must have a valid California driver's license, approved for the class of vehicle to be driven. And, the driver must have completed a driver-training course approved by the Department of Motor Vehicles and the CHP. Transport drivers should maintain a safe speed for the road, weather, traffic, and posted signs and they should exercise caution when crossing lanes of traffic, when turning, and while making u-turns. Drivers should stay focused on driving and not eat, talk to passengers or talk on the phone. If drivers are sleepy or fatigued, they shouldn't drive. And, they should never drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

With a properly working transport vehicle and a licensed and careful driver, agricultural workers can be transported to the fields and home again safely. □

THE EXPERT'S CORNER

FLAT-PANEL MONITORS – THEIR TIME HAS COME

Since the earliest days of computers in the workplace, cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors have been standard. Several years ago, however, flat-panel monitors, using LCD technology were introduced, but like all new technology the concept was at first cost-prohibitive. That has all changed in recent years, with a good quality 17" LCD monitor now readily available in the \$250-300 price range. But what compelling reasons would motivate a company to make this change?

Real estate – CRT monitors are both heavy (a 19" CRT weighs about 46 lbs, compared to a comparably sized LCD, weighing about 14 lbs) and take up a lot of space on the work surface. The larger the screen size, the deeper footprint the monitor requires – usually over 18 inches for a 19" CRT. An LCD screen has a depth of only 2-3 inches – the space gained can be used to properly adjust the monitor and also to place or store additional items.

LCDs produce less heat and use about 60% less energy than CRTs, so a company can realize an immediate cost benefit savings as well.

LCDs have a larger viewable screen, effectively eliminating the borders commonly associated with traditional CRTs. This means that a 17" LCD screen is equivalent in viewing area to a 19" CRT.

With LCD technology, screen glare due

to poor office lighting design and screen flicker are virtually eliminated; both have often been associated as causal factors in worker health issues.

Once a company does decide to upgrade to LCD monitors, one area often overlooked is the option of mounting the screen to an articulating monitor arm. These days, monitor arms are available in an array of styles and configurations, with literally any type of mounting option. A good arm will run \$150 – \$300, but will give each user the ability to dial in the perfect adjustment for them, improving comfort and lessening the chance of musculoskeletal disorders. For shared workstations, these arms are a must and probably offer the only good way to achieve a proper fit. □



Added adjustability and multiple screen capacity are features offered by articulating monitor arms

(courtesy of www.workriteergo.com and www.lcdarms.com)

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Tailgate Topic

Prevent Strains And Sprains

Strains and sprains account for a majority of workplace injuries and lost work time. The injuries are often caused by lifting, pushing or overreaching and usually affect the back, shoulders, and arms. Although it only takes a moment to cause one of these injuries, it can take many painful days or months to heal. Preventing strain and sprain injuries is a lot easier than correcting them.

Your body works best when it's used as it was designed. When you force your body to do things, you risk a strain or sprain injury. How can you prevent these injuries? The obvious thing is to work within your limits, eat healthy, drink water, exercise, and get enough rest.

Poor material handling techniques, such as lifting things that weigh too much or lifting incorrectly, account for many strains and sprains. Before lifting, consider the weight, size, and shape of the load. If you're not sure you can handle the load, break it down into smaller parts or get help from another worker. If you can't break it down, use a mechanical lifting device.

Strains and sprains can occur from even moderate loads if they're handled in awkward positions. Carry

the load close to your body, keeping as much of it as you can at waist level. When carrying a load, try to avoid bending or twisting. If you use a mechanical lifting device, be sure the device works properly.

Working for long periods in an awkward, bent-over or twisted position can also strain or sprain body parts.

Because strain increases in proportion to the distance of the work from your body, keep as close to the work area as possible. There's less strain on your body if the work is positioned between your shoulders and waist, with a waist high level being the most neutral and comfortable. You may need to raise or lower yourself for better positioning.

Take care of your body by eating healthy foods and exercising. Do some stretching exercises before work and during the day to increase your flexibility. If your muscles or ligaments have weakened over time from lack of exercise or age, you're more likely to get a strain or sprain. □



Temas de Seguridad

Prevenir las distensiones musculares y las torceduras

Las distensiones musculares y las torceduras causan la mayoría de las lesiones en el lugar de trabajo y la consiguiente pérdida de tiempo de trabajo. Las lesiones a menudo ocurren al tratar de levantar, empujar o estirarse para alcanzar objetos y usualmente afectan la columna, los hombros y los brazos. No obstante que estas lesiones pueden ocurrir en unos segundos, sanar puede tomarle

muchos días o meses de dolor. Prevenir las distensiones y las torceduras es mucho más fácil que corregirlas.

Su cuerpo funciona mejor cuando se lo usa de la manera en que fue diseñado. Al forzar a su cuerpo a realizar cosas que exceden su capacidad, incurre en el

riesgo de sufrir una distensión muscular o una torcedura.

¿Cómo puede prevenir estas lesiones? Lo que resulta más evidente es conservarse en buen estado físico y realizar trabajos dentro de sus propias limitaciones.

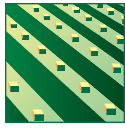
Cuide de su cuerpo mediante el ejercicio regular y una buena alimentación. Si sus músculos o ligamentos se han debilitado con el tiempo por la falta de ejercicio o por la edad, usted tendrá más probabilidades de sufrir una distensión muscular o una torcedura que si estuviera en buen estado físico. Haga algunos ejercicios de estiramiento antes de trabajar y durante el día para aumentar su flexibilidad.

Las técnicas deficientes de

manejo de materiales, como levantar artículos que pesan demasiado o levantar erróneamente artículos, son las causas principales de las distensiones musculares y las torceduras. Antes de levantar un objeto, considere el peso, el tamaño y la forma de la carga. Si no está seguro de poder con la carga, obtenga la ayuda de otro trabajador o separe el objeto en partes más pequeñas. Si no puede separarlo en partes más pequeñas utilice un dispositivo mecánico de levantamiento.

Las distensiones y las torceduras pueden ocurrir incluso con cargas moderadas si se manipulan en posiciones inusuales. Transporte la carga lo más cerca posible de su cuerpo al nivel de la cintura. Al transportar una carga, trate de evitar flexionar el cuerpo o agacharse. Si utiliza un dispositivo mecánico como ayuda para mover la carga, asegúrese de que el dispositivo funcione correctamente.

Al trabajar durante períodos prolongados en posiciones inusuales, agachado o con el cuerpo girado pueden ocurrir distensiones musculares o torceduras de las partes del cuerpo. Debido a que las distensiones aumentan en proporción con la distancia entre el área de trabajo y su cuerpo, manténgase lo más cerca posible del área de trabajo. Existe menos esfuerzo en su cuerpo si el trabajo se coloca entre sus hombros y la cintura, y la altura de la cintura permite lograr la posición neutral más cómoda. Quizá sea necesario que se empine o se baje un poco para acomodarse bien la carga. □



Please forward to the person responsible for your safety program

S T A T E C O M P E N S A T I O N I N S U R A N C E F U N D

Reporting Work-Related Injuries

State Fund's Claims Reporting Center (1-888-222-3211) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for policyholders to report injuries as soon as they occur. Agents will do the necessary paperwork to get the claim started and refer the injured to the designated physician or provider.

Within 8 hours of any serious illness or injury (requiring hospitalization over 24 hours, other than for medical observation or where there is permanent employee disfigurement) or death occurring in the workplace or in connection with employment, employers must report the incident to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. □

Required Employer Responsibilities

California law requires that:

"Every employer...shall post and keep posted in a conspicuous location frequented by employees and where (it) may be easily read by employees during the hours of the workday, a notice which shall state the name of (the) current compensation insurance carrier..."

The notice must also contain information regarding employee rights and responsibilities and must

"...be posted in both English and Spanish where there are Spanish-speaking employees."

Additionally, the law requires employers to provide a form on which employees may indicate the name of their personal physician or personal chiropractor. The form must be provided to new hires either at the time the employee is hired or by the end of the first pay period.

If you would like free copies, in English or Spanish, of the required posting notice, the brochure explaining an employee's workers' compensation rights or the physician predesignation form, call State Fund's toll-free customer service number at 1-877-405-4545. □

Check out State Fund's Loss Control "Safety Seminars"
www.scif.com

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- Stockton** (209) 476-2600

Multilingual Health & Safety Resource Guide

The ethnic diversity in today's workplace has a changed set of dynamics and corresponding challenges for employers, especially in regards to communicating necessary safety and health information. Employers cannot simply assume that workers understand the dangers of their work environment or that they are aware of emergency response procedures. And, because California law requires employers to ensure that any safety or health information that is given is understood, employers may need to provide the training information in a language other than English. To assist in this effort, multilingual training material is available from various sources including State Fund and Cal/OSHA. Workplace health and safety information in 17 languages can also be accessed at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/chswc/MultilingualGuide/MultilingualGuide.html> and <http://www.dir.ca.gov/chswc/multilingualguide/multilingualguide.html#MultilingualWebsites>.

State Fund believes that although individuals have preferences in the way messages are delivered and what language is spoken, safety and health issues should not be left to interpretation. □

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www.scif.com

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