

news & notes

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

We take many precautions to prevent fires in this facility—from using fire-retardant materials to installing smoke detectors and sprinkler systems.

We also have alarm systems to alert us to fires and policies for calling in trained firefighters and evacuating the area if there's a fire. And, in most cases, for most employees, evacuation is the correct response to a fire.

A large fire raging out of control is no place for amateurs. However, in some circumstances a portable fire extinguisher, if properly used, can be an effective fire-fighting tool that anyone can use.

For example, if a fire is small and contained, like a wastebasket fire, you can usually control it with a portable extinguisher if you act quickly and correctly.

The key to using fire extinguishers safely is knowing when to use them and when not to. Remember that portable extinguishers only last a few seconds and can't control big or rapidly spreading fires. So if you have doubt about whether to use a portable fire extinguisher, DON'T. Instead, sound the alarm, evacuate the building, and let professional firefighters handle the situation.

If you do decide to use an extinguisher but the fire doesn't go out immediately, leave the area, sound the alarm, and call in trained firefighters.

Please don't try to be a hero. By doing so, you could be endangering not only yourself but others as well.

Installation Safety Office

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Fort Detrick, MD

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Home Safety Checklist

Find out how safe your home is

How safe is your home? Use this checklist as a guide:

	YES	NO
• Are floors, halls, and stairs clear and is lighting adequate?	£	£
• Do all stairways have sturdy railings?	£	£
• Is carpet or vinyl well tacked down?	£	£
• Do you have nonskid mats or decals in bathtubs and showers?	£	£
• Do you have smoke detectors on each floor, including basement and attic, and do you check detector batteries regularly?	£	£
• Do you have fire extinguishers in the kitchen, garage, and home workshop?	£	£
• Do you store flammable liquids in tight, labeled containers away from heat and electricity (preferably outside the house)?	£	£
• Do you take care not to overload electrical circuits?		
• Do you use a fireplace screen and clean the chimney annually?	£	£
• Are any extension cords tripping hazards?	£	£
• Do you use outdoor electric cords for outdoor uses?	£	£
• Do you check insulation and plugs on electric cords?	£	£
• Do you store cleaning solutions, pesticides, and other hazardous chemicals in places where children can't get them?	£	£
• Do you read labels on household cleaners, garden supplies, etc. and follow recommendations for use and storage?	£	£
• Do you keep firearms under lock and key and store ammunition in a separate place, out of reach of children?	£	£
• Do you keep medicines in childproof containers, out of kids' reach?	£	£
• Do you keep electrical appliances away from water?	£	£
• Do you unplug electrical appliances and tools when not in use?	£	£
• Do you have GFCI outlets in the bathroom and kitchen?	£	£
• Are power tools in good working condition, including all safety guards and devices?	£	£
• Do you always unplug tools and equipment before making adjustments or repairs?	£	£
• Do you use PPE such as eye protection, gloves, or hearing protection, when necessary?	£	£



"I can't read the label in this light. Pass me that blowtorch, will you?"



Safe and Sober

Don't put yourself and others at risk

True or False?

- Alcohol-related problems affect only a very small percentage of the population. (False. Alcohol-related problems are believed to affect one in four American families and can strike anyone regardless of age, race, or gender. It's estimated that 18 million Americans have alcohol problems, and 10 million are alcoholics.)
- Alcohol abuse may be an important health issue, but it has nothing to do with the job. (False. The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that at least 1 in 10 employees comes to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Furthermore, workers under the influence are 3.6 times more likely to be involved in an accident. In a recent year, one in six fatally injured workers in the United States tested positive for drugs or alcohol.)

Substance abuse affects your ability to think and function safely and effectively. Although a single drink may not be a problem in most cases, larger amounts of alcohol can impair your judgment, slow your reactions, and interfere with your ability to drive a vehicle, use equipment, or work safely. When you come to work under the influence, you put not only yourself but also your co-workers at risk.

news & notes

LIFE OR DEATH?

According to the old saying, you can't avoid death and taxes. But the facts tell a different story—at least as far as death is concerned.

Many deaths in America today are preventable. Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control show that the causes of death in one recent year were:

- * Tobacco (435,000)
- * Poor diet and physical inactivity (400,000)
- * Alcohol consumption (85,000)
- * Microbial agents (e.g., influenza and pneumonia, 75,000)
- * Toxic agents (e.g., pollutants and asbestos, 55,000)
- * Motor vehicle accidents (43,000)
- * Firearms (29,000)
- * Sexual behavior (20,000)
- * Illicit use of drugs (17,000)

You can prevent an early death if you:

- Stop smoking
- Eat right and exercise every day
- Don't use illegal drugs and drink alcohol in moderation
- Be a defensive driver
- Take care of yourself when you get sick

BE PREPARED!

The Scout's slogan "Be Prepared" is a motto that every worker can take to heart. To be safe on the job, plan ahead and be prepared for every possible problem. After all, if you don't know what is going to happen, you can't stop it. That's why you need to:

- Find out about each job before you begin.
- Identify all the hazards.
- Anticipate problems and develop solutions.
- Keep alert while you work.

Chem Check

Don't let hazardous substances harm you

Check out these rules for working safely with and around hazardous substances:

- J Read the chemical's container label and its material safety data sheet.
- J Ask your supervisor about anything you don't understand before starting work.
- J Keep on hand only the amount of chemicals you need for the job.
- J Perform your work only in designated areas.
- J Make sure the area is adequately ventilated.
- J Use required personal protective equipment.
- J Store hazardous substances in unbreakable containers in a well-ventilated area away from heat sources.
- J Check stored chemicals regularly for damaged containers and leaks.
- J Dispose of chemicals and other contaminated waste in the approved manner.
- J Clean up spills immediately—or report them if you aren't authorized to perform a cleanup.
- J Obey warning signs posted around your work area.
- J Keep your work area clean and neat at all times.
- J Practice good personal hygiene—wash thoroughly after handling chemicals.
- J Remove and dispose of contaminated clothes and equipment properly.
- J Be careful not to spread chemical contamination to clean areas of the facility.
- J Don't take contamination home and place your family at risk.
- J Know what to do in an emergency.



Trick or Treat Tips

How to dress your kids to keep them safe

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends the following:

- For greater visibility, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that glows in the beam of a car’s headlights. Bags or sacks can also be decorated with reflective tape.
- Have children carry flashlights so they can see and be seen.
- Costumes need to be short enough to prevent trips and falls.
- Have children wear sturdy shoes that fit well. Mother’s high heels are not a good idea for safe walking.
- Tie hats and scarves securely to prevent them from slipping over kids' eyes.
- Think about applying a natural mask of cosmetics rather than having a child wear a loose-fitting mask that might restrict breathing or obscure vision. If a mask is used, make sure it fits securely and has eyeholes large enough to allow full vision.
- Make sure swords, knives, and similar costume accessories are of soft and flexible material.

Also make sure to look for the words “flame resistant” on the label when you purchase costumes, masks, beards, and wigs. Although this doesn’t mean these items won’t catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.

news & notes

TAKE CARE OF YOUR PPE AND IT WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU

You know how to use personal protective equipment (PPE) and how to inspect it before each use. But what about after you use it? Like all tools, PPE has to be kept clean and in good condition in order to work well. Here’s how:

- Always check PPE for damage after you remove it.
- Clean PPE *before* putting it away.
- Dispose of any single-use or damaged PPE in the proper manner.
- Store PPE carefully in its assigned place. Avoid conditions that could damage it, such as heat, sunlight, or moisture.

HELP PREVENT CRIME: MAKE OUR WORKPLACE SECURE

October is National Crime Prevention Month. Take these steps to make workplace security a priority:

- Keep alert to potential security problems while you work.
- Report any suspicious activities or individuals immediately.
- Keep your personal belongings and valuables locked up.
- Don’t leave doors open that should be locked or let in people you don’t know.
- Follow security rules regarding supplies and equipment.
- Take appropriate action in situations involving violence or the threat of violence.
- Follow all computer security rules and never allow unauthorized people access to facility computers or networks.
- Shred documents that contain confidential information before disposal.



Happy Thanksgiving!

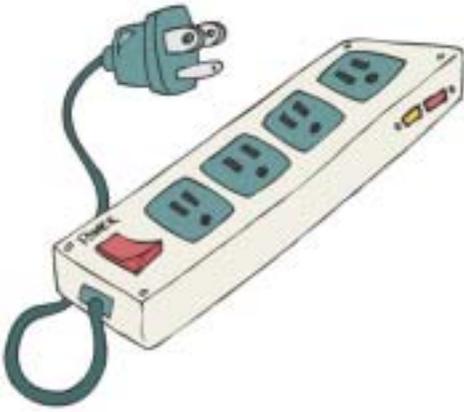
Don’t be a turkey behind the wheel

A national poll indicates that drivers themselves—more than traffic conditions or vehicles—are the greatest safety threat on the road. Drivers responding to the poll admitted that they knowingly and routinely engage in careless driving behavior and dangerous driving practices.

The research was commissioned by *Drive for Life: The National Safe Driving Initiative*, a coalition of highway safety experts and advocates. It found that Americans believe that cars are safer but drivers more dangerous than in the past. The poll also found that most drivers engage in one or more other activities while driving. For instance, 59 percent of the people polled said that they eat while driving and 37 percent said that they talk on a cell phone. Furthermore, 71 percent admitted to speeding and considered it OK to routinely exceed the speed limit by five miles per hour.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Commission says driver inattention is a primary or contributing factor in as many as 50 percent of all crashes.

If you’re going to be doing any driving over the Thanksgiving weekend, please remember to drive defensively, allow plenty of time, and take extra care. There are going to be a lot of people on the road.



Safe or Unsafe?

You decide

Electricity is such a common feature of our lives that we often forget how dangerous it is. Decide whether these actions are safe or unsafe.

	Safe	Unsafe
1. Plug a refrigerator into a power strip.	£	£
2. Protect an extension cord from foot traffic by running it under a rug.	£	£
3. Plug a computer into a power strip with a circuit breaker.	£	£
4. Plug a power strip into a power strip.	£	£
5. Wearing rubber boots, wade through 2 inches of water in the basement to the electrical box.	£	£
6. Turn off gas at the outside meter if you think gas is leaking.	£	£
7. Keep cleaning fluid in a closed cupboard.	£	£
8. Store gasoline in a closed cupboard in the basement.	£	£

Answers: (1) False. Power strips are not designed for heavy appliances, which should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. (2) False. Electrical cords should not be placed under a carpet or rug. (3) True (4) False. Never daisy-chain power strips. (5) False. Entering a flooded basement (even with rubber boots on) to turn off electricity would expose you to the risk of electrical shock. (6) True (7) True (8) False. Gasoline should not be stored inside the house.

news & notes

DANGER! ANGRY WORKER!

Most people probably don't think of anger as a safety hazard. But it is, and it's right up there at the top of the list.

When people get angry, common sense goes out the window. The adrenalin is pumping. It makes them feel indestructible, and they can only think about what's making them angry. They bang and smash and crash around. They throw things and shout and stamp their feet.

And all the while, they are completely heedless of the need to take the proper safety precautions. Remember, an angry worker is a dangerous worker.

From time to time, everybody gets angry on the job. The dangerous part is staying angry and working angry.

If you do get angry, take a moment to process what you're feeling. Why are you angry? What can you do about it? Take some deep breaths and count to 10. Talk to a co-worker or your supervisor about what's bothering you. When you feel calm again, it's safe to get back to work.

DON'T HIDE MISTAKES

Joe dropped the drill he was using and the casing cracked. He didn't want to get in trouble, so he put it back in the tool crib without telling anyone. The next day he heard that a co-worker got a bad shock while using that drill.

Don't hide mistakes. If you mess up, 'fess up. Tell your supervisor what happened. Warn co-workers, if necessary. Learn from the mistake so that you don't make the same one again.

Fire Safety Quiz

Your knowledge can prevent workplace fires

Check your knowledge of workplace fire safety by taking the following quiz.

1. Smoking in unauthorized areas and careless disposal of smoking materials are major causes of workplace fires.	T F
2. One way to prevent electrical fires is not to overload circuits or outlets.	T F
3. Compressed gas cylinders should be stored on their sides so that they can't topple over.	T F
4. Before using any substance, check the label and the material safety data sheet to see if it is flammable or combustible.	T F
5. Flammable liquids are particularly hazardous because not only can the liquid itself catch fire but so can the vapors.	T F
6. Housekeeping practices have little to do with fireprevention.	T F
7. If you see a fire hazard outside of your work area, it's not your responsibility to report it.	T F

Answers: (1) True (2) True (3) False. They should be stored in an upright position and carefully secured to keep them from falling over. (4) True (5) True (6) False. Keeping the facility clean and neat can eliminate potential fire hazards. (7) False. Report any fire hazard you see anywhere in the facility right away.