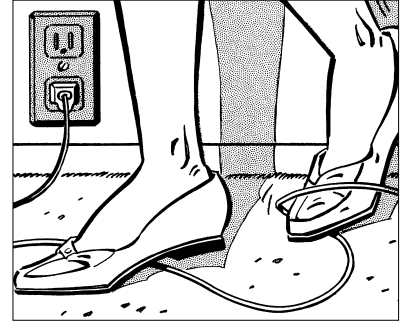


# Safety Matters—Even in an Office

People in hazardous work areas usually learn safety as part of their job training. But even an office can be a dangerous place if you're not aware of safety hazards. Here are some tips on protecting yourself from common office safety hazards.

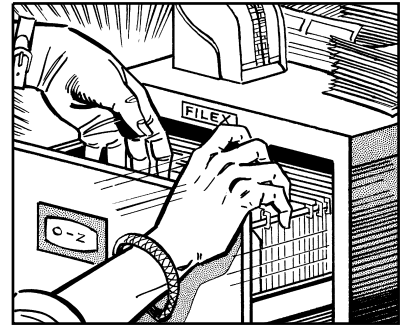
**Watch out for falls.** You can fall while walking, climbing stairs or even leaning back in chairs. You can trip on telephone and electric cords, open drawers and misplaced boxes or furniture. It's easy to slip on a spot of spilled coffee on a linoleum floor. To prevent these common office accidents, keep your office tidy, with boxes and furniture in their proper places. Clean up spills and report worn or loose carpet immediately.



**Guard against electric shock.** Make sure equipment is properly grounded using three-pronged plugs. Check cables regularly and replace frayed or improper wiring. Keep coffee and other liquids away from your electrical equipment.

**Learn to lift.** Bend your knees, hold the load close, straighten up using your legs and avoid twisting. Get help with heavy or awkward loads.

**Watch out for that file cabinet.** Top-heavy drawers can cause a cabinet to topple over. Drawers can also pinch fingers if slammed shut and can cause injuries if left open in walkways. Open one drawer at a time, and close the drawers slowly and carefully.



**Be fire-safe.** Cigarettes and electrical equipment are common sources of fires. Keep flammable materials (such as solvents) at least a foot-and-a-half from coffee makers, electric heaters and hot plates. If you smoke, avoid throwing matches or smoldering cigarettes on the floor or in wastebaskets.

**Protect your wrists from repetitive motion injuries,** such as those caused by constant typing from an uncomfortable position. If you use a keyboard, learn proper hand positions and seat height. Take breaks to exercise and stretch your hands and arms.

**Avoid office avalanches.** Keep boxes and books on shelves and papers inside cabinets, not piled on top of them. Avoid pulling something from halfway down a stack—it's a sure way to set off an avalanche.

**Be prepared.** Chances are you won't experience an office emergency, but if you do, do you know where to go for first aid? Do you know how to reach the nearest emergency exit? Do you know the fire escape procedures and the location of fire extinguishers? Do you know who to contact and how to reach them?

**Bring a safe attitude to work.** Anger, stress, intoxication and horseplay can all threaten office safety.



Knowing the hazards, taking action to prevent risky situations and having a safe attitude are the keys to safety in the office.