

Office Safety & Housekeeping

USC

*EH&S Fact Sheet
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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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General safety and housekeeping in our busy office environment should not be overlooked. Good housekeeping practices protect people from a variety of possible injuries and illnesses and provide a pleasant and clean workplace !!

Electrical Equipment

- Extension cords should be used for temporary power only. Cords on floors can be trip hazards and are easily damaged by trolleys and chair castors which in turn can create an electrical hazard. To install permanent wiring, contact Facilities Management Services. *Note: Extension cords should not be run through doorways, walls, across ceilings, or under carpets. They should never be placed over radiators, steam pipes or plugged into other extension cords.*
- Do not use power strips in multiple, “daisy chain” combinations.
- Avoid the use of three-prong to two-prong adapters. Find a three-prong outlet.
- The use of space heaters in the confines of office workstations can be hazardous. Ensure that space heaters are UL-listed, are equipped with automatic shut-offs that will actuate if the heater tips over and located at least 3 feet from paper and other combustible material.



Storage & Cabinets

- Don't place file cabinets where people are likely to walk into open drawers.
- Do not overload top drawers and create a top-heavy file cabinet that could topple. Keep files loosely packed to prevent hand and wrist strains.
- Store items in an approved storage space. Take care not to stack boxes too high (It is helpful to label the boxes with their contents to avoid unnecessary handling).
- Bookshelves and cabinets over 4 feet in height can be unstable and must be secured so they will not fall over.



Slips Trips and Falls

- Trips often result from obstructions and uneven surfaces, and can usually be avoided by ensuring that floor surfaces are clear and even.
- Ensure that office lighting is adequate and replace burned out light bulbs.
- Clean spills and pick up fallen debris immediately. Even a loose pencil could cause someone to slip.

Additional information about office ergonomics, waste management and emergency procedures can be found on the EH&S Web Page at:
<http://capsnet.usc.edu/ehs/>

EH&S Fact Sheets are intended for facilitating team discussions in your department. Post the monthly topic on your departmental bulletin board.