

SAFE WORK PRACTICES for EDUCATORS

Contra Costa County Schools Insurance Group
Workers' Compensation/Health & Safety Services & Health Benefits Program Provider



Keep your classroom aisles free of trip hazards, be aware of wet areas near sinks and use caution when hanging items on walls.



SAFETY AT THE CENTER OF IT ALL

As an educator, you have a strong commitment to the well-being and academic success of your students. Taking care of your own health and safety at work helps you meet these goals by avoiding injuries and illnesses that could mean time away from work.

Did You Know?

- The #1 injury among teachers is from slips, trips and falls. These injuries can be caused by slippery or uneven walking surfaces and inappropriate footwear.

Keep yourself safe and healthy on the job by following the tips in this flyer on how to identify and avoid potential hazards.

SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

- Pay special attention to wet and slippery floors around sink areas at all times.
- Use caution near entry areas and on cement walkways during rainy/icy weather.
- Do not place electric cords across walkways.
- Unplug and roll up long electric cords when not in immediate use.
- If you need to reach high places, never stand on a chair or desk. Use a ladder or footstool, or ask a custodian for help.
- Keep classrooms free of clutter.
- Ask students to move backpacks out of walkways.
- Make sure shelves and storage racks are stable and secured.
- Wear closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes with no heel (or low block heel).
- Be aware of caution signs for maintenance and construction projects.

ERGONOMIC

- Seek assistance from custodial or maintenance staff when attempting to move furniture or other heavy items.
- Do not twist or over-extend while lifting.
- When lifting, keep loads close to your body; bend at the knees and lift with your legs; keep your back straight; and do not twist.
- When you work on a computer: Position the chair and desk so that your knees and forearms are at 90 degree angles, with wrists straight and feet flat on the floor or on a footrest; the top of your screen should be at or just below eye level, and 16-22 inches away.
- Avoid using chairs or other furniture designed for children.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Attempt to keep student activities in front of you when supervising playground activities to prevent being inadvertently hit by a ball.
- Establish a contingency plan for dealing with student conduct when you suspect it may lead to violence.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

- Wash your hands frequently, and encourage your students to do the same.
- Teach students to cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze.
- If you may come into contact with blood or other bodily fluids:
 - Wear disposable gloves
 - Wash your hands with soap and water
 - Disinfect any equipment or work areas that are affected

CHEMICALS

- If you use chemicals in your class:
 - Use the least toxic chemical you can.
 - Make sure all chemicals are labeled. If you put chemicals into a different container, label the new container.
 - Obtain a Safety Data Sheet for each product.
 - Ventilate your classroom.