



General Office Safety

West Virginia University
Environmental Health and Safety



Recommended Safe Office Practices

- Review and understand information provided in office business machine operator's manuals with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Use proper lifting techniques when moving office objects.
- Close desk and file drawers to prevent bumping injuries.
- Keep hallways and aisles unobstructed to prevent trip and fall injuries.
- Do not use damaged electrical cords/plugs/receptacles. Report them to your supervisor.
- Arrange computer workstations to reduce the potential for repetitive motion injuries.
- When fixing paper jams in photocopiers or facsimile machines follow the manufacturer's instructions printed on panels and levers. Avoid touching surfaces that are labeled with "Caution Hot" signs.
- Do not block fire extinguishers, exit doors, or sprinkler heads.
- Store heavy office items and supplies on lower shelves.
- When working with office equipment pay attention to the task you are performing.
- Use caution when using a paper cutter or feeding paper into an automatic paper shredder.
- Do not overreach, use a step stool or ladder to reach elevated items.
- Bookshelves should be anchored to walls.
- Never run extension or electrical cords under carpeting. Never overload power strips or connect power strips in a series.
- Disconnect electrical cords from receptacles by pulling on the plug.
- Clean up spills, particularly fluid spills on tile, sealed concrete, or hardwood floors.
- Do not store items on top of bookshelves or file cabinets.
- Become familiar with your work area and be aware of any workplace hazards.
- All employees should be trained on building evacuation and fire prevention plans.
- Practice good housekeeping in offices.

