OFFICE SAFETY GUIDELINES
An office may seem to be a relatively safe place to work; however, there are a variety of hazards that you should be aware of.
1. Heavy objects should be kept off the top of file cabinets and other high furniture. Movable objects, such as flowerpots, vases, and bottles should not be placed on windowsills or ledges.
2. Make sure that thumb tacks and other sharp objects are not thrown loosely into desk drawers.
3. Misuse of filing cabinets is another major source of office injuries. Use the file drawer handle to close the file drawer, making sure your fingers are not curled over the edge when the drawer closes. Only one file drawer in the cabinet should be opened at one time to prevent the cabinet from toppling over.
4. Electrical office equipment of every kind should be properly grounded using a double insulated three-wire grounding system plug to reduce the likelihood of electrical shock.
5. Never yank a power cord. Always grasp the plug to pull it out of a receptacle.
6. No matter how well an office machine works, always turn it off before adjusting or servicing it.
7. Make sure electric outlet boxes are not exposed.
8. Frayed electrical cords should be reported immediately and replaced by the electronic technicians.
9. Use of extension cords as a permanent power source is strictly prohibited. Surge Protectors are acceptable. Do not “daisy chain” or connect two or more surge protectors together to reach the equipment, get a longer cord if necessary.
10. If you ever suffer even the mildest shock when you touch an office machine, or if you see an office machine giving off smoke or sparks, unplug it only if it can be done safely and summon a qualified repair crew at once. At the same time, post a sign near/on the machine saying that it is out of order and dangerous.
11. Keep electrical cords out of walkways. If there are no other receptacle choices and your electrical cord passes across a walkway, cover the cord with a warning bumper, mat or rug to prevent tripping hazards.
12. Locate fire extinguishers, and learn how to use them. Memorize where the emergency exits are located. Know your nearest primary fire escape route, and a secondary exit, in case the primary exit is blocked. You should also know where and how to use or activate the fire alarm system and other firefighting equipment in emergencies.
13. If your emergency exit involves a stairway, note the location and number of the stairway you are in on the stairway walls as you are leaving in case you need to communicate this to the first responder. This is particularly important if you are helping a physically challenged employee and cannot take them down the stairs. You can communicate to the first responders the location of the physically challenged employee.
14. Never store pencils in a container on the desk with points outward.
15. Never leave scissors or any other sharp pointed object on a desk with the point toward the user.
16. Never exchange sharp pointed objects to anyone point first.
17. Don't leave objects on the edge of a desk or table where they can easily be pushed off.
18. Qualified maintenance employees, preferably using special hand trucks, should be the only employees moving desks or files with dollies made for heavy lifting.
19. Standing on a chair to reach an overhead object is very dangerous and should never be attempted. Instead, use a step stool or ladder.

20. Leaning too far back in a chair, leaning sideways from a chair to pick up objects on the floor, scooting across the floor while sitting in a chair, backing up too far in a chair without looking, and sitting on the edge of a chair instead of the center should always be avoided. Any of these situations could result in a sudden and dangerous fall to the floor.

21. All materials should be stored inside of cabinets, files, and lockers. NEVER store items on top of a cabinet. Storing items on top of cabinets can impede the flow of the sprinkler system in case of a fire, or can topple over onto the employee trying to open the cabinet door.

22. Never stand on an open file drawer or climb on shelves to grasp materials that would otherwise be out of reach. Again, use a step stool or ladder.

23. Never test a jammed stapler with your thumb over the business end.

24. Always remove staples with a staple remover, not your fingernails.

25. When reaching for an object, always look for hazards that could injure your head as well as your hand. Do not carry a sharp pencil in a pocket, use a pocket protector and keep the point down.

26. If you have to carry materials through a doorway, make sure there is adequate clearance on the sides and at the top (you should be able to see over the top and around the sides of whatever materials you have to carry). Pinched fingers are painful, and so is an injured foot caused by dropping materials on it.

27. Do not reach into a desk drawer for pencils, pens, or other objects without looking. Looking first and proper placement will help decrease the likelihood of pencil punctures, etc.

28. Paper cutters should be properly guarded for maximum protection. When using a paper cutter, keep your fingers away from the blade. Do not release your hold on the blade handle while cutting and never leave the blade in an upright position. Lock the blade handle when you are finished.

**HOUSEKEEPING:**

1. Keep aisles, paths of egress, and work places clear. Keep materials neatly organized and located away from high traffic areas.

2. Refuse containers should not be overfilled. They should be emptied daily.

3. KEEP EXITS CLEAR AT ALL TIMES. Fire doors SHALL NEVER be blocked or otherwise made inoperative. If you need to keep a fire exit door open have magnetic locks installed to maintain compliance with Fire Code regulations.

4. Keep stairways and landings clear and free from materials that could cause a tripping hazard.

5. Use a broom and pan when removing broken glass; never pick glass up with bare hands.

6. When a slippery substance such as grease or oil is spilled on the floor, clean it up immediately. Place warning signs around the area until it is safe to traverse.

7. Defective floors, rugs, and floor mats are tripping hazards and should be immediately reported to maintenance for repairs or, if possible, removed until they can be replaced. Place warning signs around the area until it is safe to traverse.

**LIFTING:**

1. Be sure you have a good footing then lift with a smooth even motion; don't jerk on a load.

2. Remove greasy substances from the hands before attempting to lift. Get a good handhold.
3. When lifting heavy objects, shift the load or your body until you are in position to make a straight lift. Never lift while in an awkward position.
4. When making a lift from the floor, keep your arms and back straight, and bend your knees, keeping load close to your body, then lift with the powerful muscles in your legs.
5. Always ask for help if the load is too heavy or the shape of the item is awkward and cannot be safely handled by one person.

BASIC SAFETY STANDARDS
1. Employees should report to work rested, alert and fit to give full attention to their job.
2. No one is expected to take risks on their jobs. The common sense, safe way, is always the best way to do a job.
3. Texting and personal phone calls are prohibited during working hours. Texting and driving is illegal in the state of Texas. Injuries caused by lack of attention because of texting or personal phone calls will be considered personal time and will not be covered under the University’s Worker’s Compensation insurance. If your job requires communication with a phone call or text, stop your activity or pull over if you are driving, complete your communication then resume your duties.
4. Within 24 hours, report your injury to your supervisor, all injuries regardless if you need medical treatment at that time or not. Cuts and scratches can easily become infected unless properly cared for. You have 30 days to go to the doctor once you report the injury.
5. Report all accidents, even near misses, to your supervisor immediately to help correct problems. (The next time it may not be a near miss!)
6. Document all injuries on the Safety Department website, sfasu.edu/safety, 24-hour Quicklink accident and injury report. The supervisor or employee can simply fill out this form to document the injury in case you need medical attention later.
7. Employees should report to their supervisor, any medication that may affect their job performance PRIOR to beginning work.
8. Learn the correct way to do your job safely.
9. Employees are urged to make suggestions that will assist in the safe performance of their work.

BE DELIBERATE, FOCUS ON HOW YOU DO YOUR JOB, AND PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS. TEXTING AND NON-BUSINESS PHONE CALLS ARE CONSIDERED PERSONAL TIME, ARE A DISTRACTION AND CAN BE DANGEROUS WHILE PERFORMING YOUR JOB FUNCTIONS. PRACTICE SAFE HABITS.