

## News & Notes

### RESPONDING TO A BACK INJURY

While prevention is the best option when it comes to lifting injuries, it isn't going to be possible to entirely eliminate all injuries. This is why it is also important for individuals to know how to respond to an injury when it does occur. Some individuals respond to these types of injuries with the "walk it off" mentality, which is a big mistake. Even though there isn't typically an obvious sign of the injury (such as blood or bruising) it is still important to treat it as the serious injury that it is.

If an employee reports that they hurt their back or any other part of the body while lifting something, they should get it checked out by a doctor. Some injuries can be very serious and can cause long-lasting injuries if not treated properly. In most cases, however, the employee will recover fully with just a little rest.

They may be able to work in a less physically intensive job for a few days while their injury heals. If that is not an option, taking a day off is often all it will take to be able to make a complete recovery. If, however, the employee tries to keep pushing themselves even when injured, they will often hurt themselves even worse. This can cause long-term or even permanent injury.

Lifting injuries need to be taken very seriously, and when addressed properly, the impact can be minimized. Take the time to do everything possible to recover after any injury and then do all you can to prevent this type of injury from occurring again. By working with the employees on injury prevention, most facilities can keep everyone healthy and productive, which is important for the success of any facility.



"Can you suggest something that will photograph well for a Facebook posting?"

### RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

- 1) What 8 letter word can have a letter taken away and it still makes a word? Take another letter away and it still makes a word. Keep on doing that until you have one letter left. What is the word?
- 2) What has a head, a tail, is brown and has no legs?
- 3) What has many keys, but can't open a single door?

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# Safety Matters

*April Showers Bring May Flowers*

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## SAFE LIFTING

Back injuries are common problems at work, home, and play. They can be caused by accidents or improper lifting technique. Below are tips to lift safely and avoid back injuries.

### Safe Lifting Recommendations

- Before you start lifting, assess the object(s) you are going to lift. A small size does not always mean a light load. Test the load by pushing on it lightly with your hands or feet. How easily it moves indicates how heavy it is.
- It's important to make sure the objects are packaged well. The load's weight needs to be balanced so it doesn't move around. Unbalanced items can come loose when you lift and cause an accident.
- Look around before you lift. There should be a clear path for you to carry your object. You also should know where you are going to put it down. Avoid walking on slippery, uneven surfaces while you're carrying something.
- The best way to pick up a load is to use handles or straps, if they exist. Make sure you have an easy and tight grip before you lift. Work or moving gloves may help with this. You also should be close to the load you're going to lift. Avoid reaching out for an object. This prevents strained muscles.
- Use your arms, legs, and core body (abdominal muscles) to lift, not your back. This includes bending your knees to pick up something, instead of bending from your waist. Maintain proper posture and don't arch your back. This is one way to cause an injury by using the wrong muscles. Another way to avoid hurting your back is to use a ladder when lifting something overhead.
- It's best to use slow and smooth movements to lift. Once you have your load, carry it straight on, instead of to one side. Quick, jerky, or twisted movements can pull your muscles.

### Lifting Considerations

- In addition to proper technique, you should warm up before lifting. Stretch your legs, arms, and back to engage your muscles.
- Know your limits, and don't overdo it. Don't carry too much in one load or setting. The correct weight is often greater than you think. Don't carry something that is too heavy. Try using a dolly or forklift, or asking others for help.
- Daily stretches and exercise also can strengthen your back muscles. This prepares you in advance for lifting objects.
- Do not rely on a back belt to protect you. There is no proof that these prevent back injuries and there are some indications that for those with certain pre-existing medical conditions (such as circulatory and high blood pressure) that wearing them while lifting could do harm.
- Last but not least, pace yourself. Take breaks between lifting to give your muscles a chance to rest and heal.

### SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

Follow these spring safety tips and seasonal reminders:

- Check all smoke detectors for low batteries.
- Make sure all your door locks are working. Install deadbolts on those doors with outside access.
- Install motion sensitive outdoor lights - not only makes for safety for your family but helps deter criminals from breaking in.
- Emergency preparedness: Consider preparing a 72 hour kit for you and your family to have in your home (<https://www.asecurelife.com/72-hour-kit/>).

## Safety Bits & Pieces

### HIGHWAY WORK ZONE SAFETY TIPS

April 9 to 13 is National Work Zone Awareness Week. Work-zone safety is important not only to protect those who build and maintain our highways, but also to protect motorists. About 80 percent of those killed in work-zone crashes are drivers and their passengers. Preventable rear-end collisions are the most common type of work-zone crash. Simple things such as slowing down, obeying signs and flaggers, and preparing for lane restrictions go a long way to keep everyone safe.

#### Safety Tips: Driving Through Work Zones

**Expect the unexpected.** Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be restricted and people may be working on or near the road.

**Slow down!** Speeding is one of the major causes of work-zone crashes.

**Keep a safe distance.** The most common type of accident in a work zone is a rear-end collision. Maintain two car lengths between you and the car in front of you as well as road crews and their equipment.

**Pay attention.** The warning signs are there to help you move safely through the work zone. Observe the posted signs.

**Obey road crew flaggers.** The flagger knows what is best for moving traffic safely in the work zone. A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign. You can be cited for disobeying a flagger's directions.

**Stay alert and minimize distractions.** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway and avoid changing radio stations or using cell phones while driving in a work zone.

**Keep up with traffic flow.** Motorists can help maintain traffic flow and posted speeds by merging as soon as possible. Do not drive right up to the lane closure and then try to barge in.

**Check road conditions before you travel.** Schedule enough time to drive safely.

**Be patient and stay calm.** Remember, crews are working to improve the road and your commute.

### RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

- 1) The word is "starting." Starting; starting; string; sting; sing; sin; in; I.
- 2) A penny
- 3) A piano

### ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



"Technology has come a long way. Instead of kicking, the baby is now tweeting."

### QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

Only loss teaches us  
about the value of things.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

## Practice Spring Safety While Spring Cleaning

As you make your way from room to room completing your spring cleaning, pay special attention to the following:

• **Dryer Vents** – If clothes are still damp at the end of a typical drying cycle or requires longer times than normal, this may be a sign that the lint screen or the exhaust duct is blocked. Pay particular attention to lint build-up in clothes dryer vents and in the exhaust ducts. **Correct by** cleaning the lint screen/filter before or after drying each load of clothes. Clean the dryer vent and exhaust duct periodically. Clean behind the dryer, where lint can build up. Keep the area around the dryer clean and free of clutter.

• **Electrical Wiring and Outlets** – Overloaded circuits and extension cords pose a real fire threat. Misusing electrical cords (such as running them under rugs, or putting them in high traffic areas) can result in electrical fires, which account for thousands of fires each year. **Correct by** replacing frayed wires or cords immediately. If you see overloaded wall sockets, remove some of the items and find a new outlet for them or have additional outlets added by a qualified electrician. Remove any cords running under carpeting or rugs. Do a quick scout of all rooms in your home to make sure no cords are trapped against walls (where heat can build up.)

• **Electrical Appliances** – Most often the electrical appliances which cause electrical fires are electric stoves, ovens, dryers, heating units, stereos and televisions. **Correct by** always unplugging electric appliances when not in use. Confirm that no flammable materials are within three feet of an electrical heater. Pay particular attention to stored items in basements and attics, by making sure they are far away from heaters.

• **Children and Matches/Lighters** – Children playing with matches or lighters are responsible for more than 35,000 fires annually in the United States. You may learn of your children's curiosity with fire while you're spring cleaning. Look under all beds, and in "secret places" such as closets or basements, where your children may leave evidence that they have played with matches or lighters. Lock up all lighters or matches and reiterate to your children that fire is absolutely not a toy.

• **Use Smoke Alarms.** Smoke alarms save thousands of lives each year. The likelihood that they will save your life greatly increases when you install smoke alarms on every floor of your home (including basement and attic), both inside and outside of your sleeping areas.

• **Smoke Alarm Maintenance** – Add smoke alarm maintenance to your spring cleaning list. They require only three minor scheduled tasks: One, replace the batteries once a year; two, keep them clean. Just as you dust your bookshelves, make sure that your smoke alarm is free from dust and debris, as it may interfere with proper functioning. Thirdly, test your smoke alarms monthly.

• **Plan Your Fire Escape** – Meet with everyone in your family to design a fire escape plan. This should include:

o Educating your family about fire. This includes reminding them to stay low to the floor during a fire, and reinforcing that they should NEVER open a door that feels hot.

o Practice escaping from each room in the house. Make every member of your family participate in "practice runs" so that all understand how to escape from each room.

o Plan your safety meeting spot. Select a location outside of the home where you will meet after escaping a fire. This could be in your neighbors' front yard, across the street, or three doors down on the sidewalk, but it should be a minimum of 100 yards from your home.

## From the State of Delaware's Office of Highway Safety...

### April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Think about it: You're driving down Delaware Highway 1 at 65 mph. Your cell phone rings. It takes four seconds to fish it out of the console to see who is calling. You just traveled more than the length of a football field with your eyes off the road! There is one thing you should never do: use your cell phone while you are behind the wheel.

While the problem spans all age ranges, texting and driving has become an especially problematic trend among millennials. Statistics indicate that young drivers 16 to 24 years old have been observed using handheld electronic devices while driving at higher rates than older drivers since 2007.

In 2016, there were 3,450 people killed and 391,000 people injured nationally because of this deadly behavior. We urge Delaware drivers to make smart choices; don't use your phone or anything else that can be distracting while behind the wheel. Spread the message. If you know someone who uses their phone while driving share the statistics, dangers, and your concerns. The best messengers for teens are their peers, so encourage your teen to share the information with their friends if they see them engaging in unsafe behavior. For more information, please visit:

[www.arrivealivede.com/Just-Drive](http://www.arrivealivede.com/Just-Drive)