OFFICE SAFETY

With this toolbox talk we will discuss how to keep a clean and safe office environment.

Storage:
A common problem found in offices is a lack of space. But a lack of space should not be used as an excuse to improperly store boxes, copier paper, etc.
- Storage of Office Materials:
  - Keep all storage of combustible materials (cardboard, paper) to an absolute minimum as they can pose both a fire and trip hazard.
  - Never store combustibles near electrical outlets.
  - Place heavier objects on lower shelves.
  - Ensure all shelves are sturdy and will be able to handle the load.
  - Never block hallways, doors, and stairwells with stored office materials.
  - There should always be clear access to electrical panels, fire extinguishers, AEDs, and fire pull stations.

Scheduled Cleaning:
- It is a good idea to schedule a few days a year to go through all your paper files and purge un-needed documents.
- Remove unnecessary objects/supplies/books from shelving units.
  - Assess if you need more shelving space and order/install what is needed to eliminate floor storage.
- Take the time to clean and sanitize your workstation as needed.
- Keyboards and telephones, in particular, should be cleaned and sanitized.

Common Office Injuries:
- Slips, Trips and Falls are the most common cause of office injuries:
  - Slipping on wet/slick floors (Clean up any spills immediately)
  - Tripping over electrical cords/wires, open cabinet doors (Secure cords/drawers)
  - Damaged flooring (Report any loose tiles, frayed/torn carpeting etc. to Facilities)
  - Objects stored on the floor (Utilize shelf/desk space wherever possible)
  - Using a chair/box for a stepladder (Always use a stepladder)
- Struck By or Striking Objects:
  - Bumping into doors, open drawers etc.
  - Bumping into other people while walking
  - Struck by suddenly opened doors or falling objects
- Overexertion and Strains:
  - Picking up a load incorrectly (Refer to our Lifting Safety Toolbox Talk for additional information)
  - Repetitive Stress injuries resulting from your workstation (Refer to our Computer Ergonomics Toolbox Talk for additional information)

Group Discussion Topics:
- Assess your workstation and correct all possible hazards.
- Is anyone in the office experiencing discomfort at their workstation? Contact EHS for an ergonomic evaluation of your workstation.
- Understand all evacuation routes from your office and where all the safety equipment is located (Fire Extinguishers, First Aid kits, AEDs, etc.)