

Safety Handbook

for Custodial Employees



TASB RISK
MANAGEMENT FUND

About This Safety Handbook

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Introduction

Your employer is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, visitors, and students.

This safety handbook informs you of the safest methods for performing certain tasks within your assigned job duties. Accident prevention is the responsibility of every employee in this organization. The best possible protection you have against injury is knowing how to perform your job duties in a safe manner. If you have questions concerning the safety of a certain procedure or how to perform your assigned task in a safe manner, consult your supervisor.

Awareness is a key factor in eliminating accidents. Your organization expects you to correct unsafe acts and the conditions you observe. If you cannot correct the unsafe act or condition on your own, consult your supervisor. Plan your activities and concentrate on the responsibilities of performing your task in a safe manner. This will help you, your fellow employees, and students avoid injury.

The TASB Risk Management Fund (The Fund), in cooperation with this organization, provides these safety handbooks to all employees.

The *TASB Risk Management Fund Safety Handbook* (The Handbook) is member-owned and is only provided to those who participate in the TASB Risk Management Fund's Workers' Compensation Program or select Property/Liability programs.

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Safety Handbook Document Sheet

Employee name: _____
(print name)

Campus/location: _____

I, _____
(print name)

have received, reviewed, and understand the contents of the *Safety Handbook* and as such will observe the safe work practices as outlined as a condition of employment to protect my safety and health. I understand that the safe work practices in this handbook are not the only rules and procedures that I will be required to follow.

I also understand I am responsible for performing my duties in a safe manner so as not to bring harm to myself or others. I am also expected to correct any unsafe act or condition; if I cannot correct the unsafe act or condition myself, I will consult my supervisor.

If I am injured during the course and scope of my duties, I will immediately report the injury to my supervisor.

Employee signature

Date

General Safety Rules— 1.00

- 1.01 All accidents, unsafe acts, and unsafe conditions should be reported to your supervisor promptly and in accordance with your organization's policy.
- 1.02 Always be willing to make suggestions that will eliminate hazards in your work area.
- 1.03 Learn the safe way to do your job. If you are not sure you thoroughly understand the job, ask your supervisor for assistance.
- 1.04 Avoid injury to yourself and others in every possible situation by paying attention to your surroundings.
- 1.05 Practice good housekeeping. Keep your work area neat and orderly at all times.
- 1.06 Clearly mark and/or barricade dangerous areas such as broken windows, slippery floors, defective equipment, etc., and report the hazard to your principal, supervisor, or your campus safety coordinator.
- 1.07 Be alert for possible hazards that may cause slipping or tripping. Be especially cautious when conditions can heighten or create hazardous situations.
- 1.08 Before demonstrating or using any type of chemical, read its Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and follow the chemical's safety procedures.
- 1.09 Use the proper prescribed personal protective equipment as required to complete each job safely.
- 1.10 Exercise caution when driving school vehicles, observe all traffic laws, and wear seat belts at all times.
- 1.11 Exercise caution when crossing the parking lot. Look for potholes, uneven surfaces, traffic, etc.
- 1.12 Stay alert for possible hazards when entering empty and dark school buildings after hours and especially at night. Utilize check in or log in procedures as required by policy, regulation, or your supervisor.

- 1.13 Know and/or post your organization's emergency telephone numbers, and observe policies and procedures regarding emergencies.
- 1.14 Carpets should be secure and not have curled edges or torn places that could cause a trip and fall.
- 1.15 Solid doors should have a clear panel at eye level to help people avoid opening the door into someone on the opposite side. A sign warning employees to "open slowly" will help if clear panels are not installed. Approach closed doors cautiously.
- 1.16 Glass doors and walls should have visible markings to prevent employees and students from walking into them.
- 1.17 Before operating machinery, be sure to read the instructions. If necessary, obtain permission and instructions from your supervisor on how to safely operate the machinery.
- 1.18 Do not distract someone who is operating machinery. If he or she is operating it in an unsafe manner, alert bystanders to the risk and calmly get their attention to cease operating the machinery.
- 1.19 Do not attempt to repair anything you are not qualified and authorized to repair.
- 1.20 Do not subdue fighting students alone. Follow your policies and procedures for these situations.
- 1.21 If a task is too difficult to complete by yourself, seek assistance rather than risk injury.
- 1.22 Do not become preoccupied while performing even the simplest tasks. Not paying attention to the job at hand causes accidents.
- 1.23 Practical jokes and horseplay are inappropriate in the workplace and may lead to accidents. Such actions are strictly forbidden.
- 1.24 On school premises, it is prohibited to consume alcohol, addictive drugs, hallucinogens, or other substances regulated by the Texas Controlled Substances Act.
- 1.25 Certain prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications can make you drowsy or alter behavior. Your pharmacist or school nurse can help identify them if you are unsure. Notify your supervisor when using these substances.
- 1.26 Smoking and use of other tobacco products are prohibited on all school property, facilities, and during school functions.

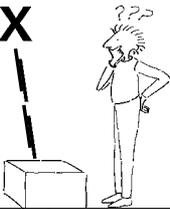
Lifting and Handling Techniques—2.00

NOTE: The TASB Risk Management Fund does not advocate the use of back belts. However, if your organization’s policy requires them, they should be used consistently and in accordance with that policy.

- 2.01 Evaluate the load to be lifted. Even light items—pencils, paper clips, papers, and newspapers—require the use of proper body mechanics. Is there any other way to handle the task, such as using a mechanical device? Do not attempt to lift it alone if it cannot be done safely.
- 2.02 Never carry a load of such size that it reduces your visibility, especially when going up or down stairs.
- 2.03 Do not attempt to move heavy, bulky, or awkwardly shaped objects alone. Get help from co-workers, the custodial department, or a mechanical lifting device.
- 2.04 Do not overfill trash cans.
- 2.05 Keep trash cans on dollies to avoid lifting.
- 2.06 Storage areas should have heavy items on middle shelving, light items up high, and rarely used items below.
- 2.07 Shelving should be secured by bolting it to the wall and to each other.

Eight Steps to a Safe Lift:

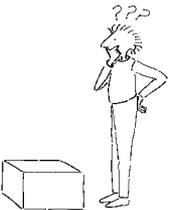
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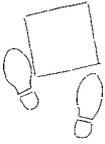
1. Size up the load

Always assess the object before lifting it. Make sure the load is stable and balanced. Carefully and slowly, put force against the object to determine its weight. *If it is too heavy, bulky, or awkward, get help.*

2. Plan the job



Plan a route that is free of tripping and slipping hazards. Ensure that the planned route allows for easy travel. Know where the object will be unloaded and plan for rest stops if necessary. Think through the lift—lift the load in your mind. Face the object you are about to lift, and, if possible, face the direction you want to go. *Do not twist your body.*



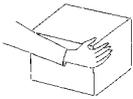
3. Establish a base of support

Make sure you have firm footing. Keep your feet at least shoulder-width apart. A staggered stance, with one foot slightly behind the other, often helps provide a firm base of support.



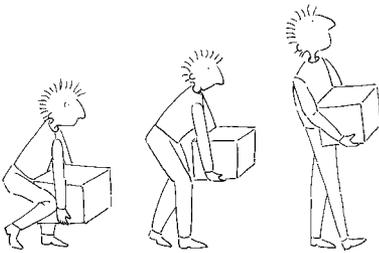
4. Bend your knees

Bend at your knees, not at your waist. Bend down as far as necessary using your legs and not your back.



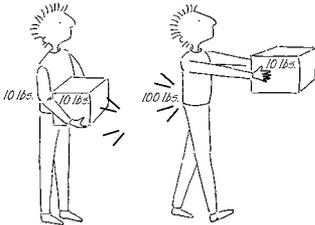
5. Get a good grip

Grip the load firmly, using more than just your fingers.



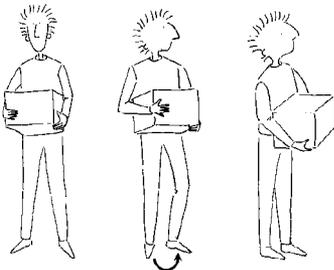
6. Lift with your legs

Lift with your legs to allow your body's powerful leg muscles to do the work. Flex your knees and hips. *Avoid bending at the waist.*



7. Keep the load close

Keep the load close to your body. The closer it is to your spine, the less force it exerts on your back. Maintain the natural inward curve of your lower back. Whether you are lifting or putting down a load, keep your back upright while you lift so you do not add the weight of your body to the load. Grasp the object with your palm, not just your fingers.



8. Pivot, don't twist

Don't twist your body when moving objects that have already been lifted. Pivot your feet and turn your entire body in the direction of movement.

Electrical Safety—3.00

- 3.01 To prevent shock, make sure that electrical equipment is grounded.
- 3.02 Inspect all electrical equipment for safety prior to use and periodically during use. Damaged or defective equipment should not be used and should be reported to your supervisor.
- 3.03 Use the right type of extension cord for the job. Only UL-approved three-wire extension cords with grounding plugs should be used.
- 3.04 Do not use extension cords as permanent wiring. Extension cords are for temporary needs.
- 3.05 Repair or discard electrical cords that are worn or damaged.
- 3.06 Do not pull or disconnect a plug from a socket by pulling on the cord.
- 3.07 Be careful not to overload outlets or extension cords. If a socket face or extension becomes warm, discontinue use immediately and notify your supervisor.
- 3.08 Do not use electrical equipment outdoors or in wet areas without a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI).
- 3.09 Clearly label all circuit breakers, electrical switches, and fuse panels.
- 3.10 Access to circuit breakers and panel boxes should not be blocked. Maintain at least 36" of clearance around them.
- 3.11 Unplug electrical appliances before cleaning.
- 3.12 Unplug appliances only with dry hands and only when standing on a dry floor.
- 3.13 Provide safety covers over all lights.
- 3.14 Ensure that all circuit openings are properly covered in the electrical panel boxes to prevent accidental electrocution.

Ladder and Scaffolding Safety—4.00

- 4.01 Use ladders when climbing—NEVER boxes, chairs, or other substitutes.
- 4.02 Do not exceed the maximum load capacity rating for the ladder.
- 4.03 Select the right ladder for the job. Make sure the ladder is strong enough and long enough. Avoid metal ladders when there is a chance of contact with a source of electrical current.
- 4.04 Never use the top two steps of a ladder.
- 4.05 Before using any ladder, examine it for cracks, loose or damaged rungs or rails, missing cleats, and broken spreaders.
- 4.06 Remove defective and broken ladders from operation and tag them OUT OF SERVICE for others to see. Do not try to repair broken ladders.
- 4.07 When setting up a stepladder, make sure the folding metal braces or spreaders are locked in their fully extended position and safety feet are secured.
- 4.08 When setting up a straight ladder or an extension ladder, set it on a firm, dry base and use the four-to-one rule. The base of the ladder should be one foot out from the wall for every four feet of ladder height to the point where the ladder touches the wall.
- 4.09 When using a ladder to gain access to a roof, the ladder should extend a minimum of three feet beyond the roofline.
- 4.10 Tie ladders to the roof so they cannot fall over and trap you on the roof.
- 4.11 Beware of setting up ladders near blind corners and other areas where the ladder could be jostled or tipped over. If a ladder must be set up in a traffic area, use a barricade or guard to prevent collisions. Avoid using ladders in these areas during class changes.
- 4.12 Do not place a ladder in front of a closed door unless the door is locked. Provide warning signs and/or a barricade or post a guard.

- 4.13 Face the ladder and, with your hands and feet, maintain three points of contact with it when climbing or descending.
- 4.14 Do not carry tools in your hands when climbing a ladder. Hoist them with a rope or carry in a tool belt.
- 4.15 Work within an arm's length while on the ladder. Climb down and move the ladder if this is not possible. Use the "belly button" rule—your belly button should not move beyond the ladder sides.
- 4.16 Do not climb higher than the second tread from the top on a step-ladder or the third rung from the top on a straight ladder.
- 4.17 Portable straight and extension ladders must be of the approved industrial grade type.

Slips, Trips, and Falls Prevention—5.00

- 5.01 Pay attention when walking so you see potential hazards.
- 5.02 Avoid carrying items that obstruct your vision.
- 5.03 Take the time to clean up spills or wet surfaces rather than walk around the hazard.
- 5.04 If you see a large spill, mark or barricade the hazard and notify your supervisor or appropriate department immediately.
- 5.05 If you mop an area, use “wet floor” signs or barricades to alert others to the hazard.
- 5.06 Avoid walking on freshly mopped and/or wet surfaces. If you must walk across them, take short, deliberate steps rolling from heel to toe.
- 5.07 Wear shoes that are slip-resistant, especially while working in high-risk areas and during inclement weather or other adverse conditions.
- 5.08 Use caution when climbing stairs and use handrails when available.
- 5.09 Loose handrails and stair treads should be reported.
- 5.10 Use mats at entryways to dry and clean shoes during wet weather.
- 5.11 Extension cords in walkways should be secured to the ground when they are used to extend power temporarily to TVs, projectors, laptops, and other electrical devices.
- 5.12 Repair or replace carpet that is torn, frayed, and/or loose at the edges.
- 5.13 Do not leave the lower drawers of filing cabinets open and unattended.

Drivers' Safety—6.00

- 6.01 Only authorized employees are permitted to operate vehicles owned by your organization.
- 6.02 Anyone driving a vehicle owned by your organization must have a valid Texas driver's license with the appropriate class and endorsement(s).
- 6.03 Keep windshields, windows, and headlights clean to maintain visibility.
- 6.04 Slow down in heavy traffic or densely populated areas.
- 6.05 Adjust speed for low-visibility or adverse-weather conditions.
- 6.06 Slow down before intersections or curves. Use appropriate signals well in advance of any action.
- 6.07 When driving in city traffic, drive defensively, be alert for mistakes or unexpected actions of others, drive slower, and be alert for pedestrians and cross traffic.
- 6.08 Before stopping or changing directions, plan ahead of time, signal early, and slow down gradually to give drivers following a chance to change pace and react accordingly.
- 6.09 Avoid tailgating. When driving passenger cars, pickup trucks, and vans use the safe-following distance two-second rule: when the vehicle in front of you passes a stationary object, count 1000-1, 1000-2. If you reach the stationary object before you count to 1000-2, put more distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. On slippery roads, give yourself even more room.
- 6.10 When driving buses or vehicles with trailers, use the four-second rule: when the vehicle in front of you passes a stationary object, count 1000-1, 1000-2, 1000-3, 1000-4. If you reach the stationary object before you count to 1000-4, put more distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. On slippery roads, give yourself even more room.
- 6.11 Use extra caution and reduce speed when approaching children at play or when passing through school zones.

- 6.12 When driving at night, keep to the right, avoid looking into the headlights of oncoming vehicles, and use low beams.
- 6.13 Drive at speeds that permit stopping within visibility range of your headlights.
- 6.14 Keep headlights on low beams to reduce the reflected glare caused by fog, rain, or wet pavement.
- 6.15 Engines should be stopped, ignition keys removed, and the doors locked when you leave the vehicle unattended.
- 6.16 All persons riding in a vehicle shall use seat belts, if installed. Do not carry more passengers than the number of working seatbelts in the vehicle.
- 6.17 Do not carry passengers in pickup truck beds.
- 6.18 Tools and equipment placed in cars or truck cabs should be stored to not interfere with vision or with the proper operation of the vehicle. Any equipment or materials being transported in the bed of the truck must be secured.
- 6.19 Nothing should be stored on the rear window ledge of any vehicle.
- 6.20 Never attempt to enter, exit, or dismount from a vehicle while it is moving.
- 6.21 Trailers, tool boxes, and trailer-mounted machinery should be secured to the towing vehicle with safety chains, in addition to the towing hitch.
- 6.22 No person should ride in or on trailer-mounted equipment while it is being towed.
- 6.23 Shelter houses and other trailer-mounted equipment should be towed at a speed reasonable under the conditions and with due regard for safety.
- 6.24 Signs for slow-moving vehicles (a reflective orange triangle with a red border) must be used on tractors, slow-moving vehicles, equipment that cannot exceed 25 miles per hour, and equipment not equipped with functioning lights.
- 6.25 Do not drive a vehicle or operate a piece of equipment that is defective. Lock out defective machinery or equipment and notify your supervisor.

- 6.26 If involved in an injury accident, your first duty is to help the injured. Do not attempt anything beyond making the injured comfortable and providing emergency first aid for which you are qualified. Send someone for medical help with needed information. (See Section 8 of this manual for safety guidelines when in contact with blood).
- 6.27 Do not drive a vehicle with something hanging from the rearview mirror. If you have a parking tag, hang it after you park.
- 6.28 Ear protection is required for heavy-equipment operators when there is a noise hazard or when it is difficult to converse comfortably at a normal range.
- 6.29 Emergency/hazard warning lights should be used when vehicles are operating or parking under conditions that might interfere with other vehicle traffic.
- 6.30 Drivers of vehicles transporting loose materials such as dirt, sand, gravel, sludge, or other material that can blow or spill off the vehicle should cover the material with canvas or otherwise secure it when appropriate.
- 6.31 When entering, exiting, or dismounting from a vehicle, watch footing to avoid slipping or falling.

Emergency Procedures—7.00

Familiarity with emergency procedures and regular practice will ensure a calm and orderly response to any emergency or incident that may occur.

- 7.01 Participate in all emergency-procedures training so you are familiar with the emergency-operations plan and all emergency procedures.
- 7.02 Pay attention to evacuation and shelter maps or diagrams. They should be posted in all rooms and offices that contain students or employees, and **all** employees should be included in drills and emergency exercises.
- 7.03 Regular drills and/or exercises should be conducted at **all** district facilities, not just campuses.
- 7.04 Be aware of the location of emergency equipment (i.e., fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, AEDs), and ask for training if you don't know how to use them.
- 7.05 If there is a fire, *don't panic*. Sound the fire alarm immediately and follow the school district's emergency-operations plan.

Bloodborne Pathogens Safety—8.00

When it becomes necessary to administer first aid to another person who is ill or injured, remember that all blood or other bodily fluids that are visibly contaminated with blood (as well as body fluids in which blood is not seen, i.e., vaginal secretions, semen, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, peritoneal fluid, pericardial fluid or amniotic fluid) should be considered infectious. If it is impossible to determine the presence of blood, the bodily fluid should be treated as if blood were present.

The following general guidelines are for employees exposed to human blood, vaginal secretions, semen, or certain other bodily fluids and other potentially infectious materials.

Avoid Contact

Inform your supervisor immediately upon exposure to blood or bodily fluids.

- 8.01 Consider all blood and Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM) to be infectious for HIV, HBV, HVC, and other bloodborne pathogens.
- 8.02 To avoid contact with blood, allow a child or injured party to tend to his own injury if able to do so. Allow him to discard the contaminated materials appropriately.
- 8.03 Don't eat, drink, apply cosmetics or lip balm, or handle contact lenses in work areas where there is a reasonable likelihood of exposure to blood or OPIM.
- 8.04 Do not store food or drinks in refrigerators, freezers, shelves, cabinets, countertops, or bench tops where exposure to blood, bodily fluids, or OPIM may exist.
- 8.05 Use a mouthpiece, resuscitation bag, pocket mask, or other ventilation device when giving rescue breathing.

Protect Yourself

- 8.06 Wear latex, vinyl, or plastic gloves approved for work with blood when hands are in contact with blood or OPIM. Remove gloves following proper removal procedures and discard in an approved container after use. Other personal protective equipment may be

required. Wash hands with antibacterial soap and warm water immediately after removing gloves.

- 8.07 Use self-sheathing needles or other methods to prevent needle sticks when giving injections.
- 8.08 Avoid mouth pipetting/suctioning, bending, recapping, shearing, or breaking of contaminated needles.
- 8.09 Discard needles and other sharp objects in a sharps container. Pick up contaminated glass (and other items that could puncture protective gloves) with tongs, forceps, or a brush and dustpan.
- 8.10 If there is a danger of human bites, wear long sleeves or other protective clothing.

Clean Up Afterward

- 8.11 If contact with blood or OPIM took place and/or immediately after removal of contaminated gloves, wash hands briskly with warm running water and antibacterial soap. Dry hands using single-use towels or hot-air drying machines immediately afterwards.
- 8.12 If hand-washing facilities are not immediately available, wash hands with an antiseptic towelette or hand cleanser. Wash hands as mentioned above as soon as possible even if antiseptic towelettes are used.
- 8.13 Minimize handling of contaminated laundry if possible—use personal protective equipment as necessary.
- 8.14 Bag all contaminated materials (towels, gauze, tissues, etc.) at the area where contaminated in leak-proof bags with a biohazard or color-coded label and seal the bags prior to removal. Remove contaminated clothing from the work area where it was contaminated. Place in approved container.
- 8.15 Sanitize areas contaminated by blood or OPIM immediately after contamination with an approved antibacterial solution provided by the organization.

Report Exposures

- 8.16 See your supervisor immediately if: blood or OPIM comes in contact with the mucous membranes such as the eyes, nose, and mouth, or skin lacerations; employee receives a needle stick from a contaminated needle; employee is bitten and the bite breaks the skin. Also see your supervisor for more information on HBV, HIV, HCV, and preventing transmission of these and other bloodborne diseases.

Basic First-Aid Procedures—9.00

The TASB Risk Management Fund encourages all employees to receive American Red Cross Basic First Aid training and keep their certification current.

If you discover an unconscious person, FIRST ASSESS THE SITUATION. Make sure it is safe to approach him. Then check his ABCs:

1. Airway—is there anything in his throat or mouth that blocks his airway?

2. Breathing—if the airway is clear, does the victim breathe on his own?

3. Circulation—if the victim breathes on his own, does the victim have a pulse?

Key points to follow in an emergency:

- 9.01 If the victim is unconscious, call for help immediately or call 911. Move victim only if it is absolutely necessary.
- 9.02 Call emergency medical services if victim is unconscious, having a seizure, has severe bleeding, or if there is doubt about the severity of the condition.
- 9.03 Remove victim from fire or a room containing carbon monoxide, smoke, or noxious fumes if you can do so safely. Stay as low to the ground as possible in a smoke-filled room.
- 9.04 Check person's general appearance, i.e., breathing, pulse, discoloration, broken limbs, burns, etc.
- 9.05 If Burned:

Heat Burns

- a. For minor burns such as first-degree (redness, swelling) or second-degree (unbroken blisters), apply cool water and submerge burned area if possible.
- b. Wash with soap and water, and gently blot dry.

- c. Apply moist sterile gauze or clean cloth and bandage loosely.
- d. For severe burns such as second-degree (broken blisters) or third-degree (white or charred appearance), bandage loosely with a dry, sterile dressing. Send the victim for medical attention.

Chemical Burns

- a. Flush chemical burns quickly with cool water for at least 15 minutes. Remove affected clothing and jewelry if not embedded in the burned area.
- b. If eyes are burned by the chemical, flush them with water for at least 15 minutes. Lift eyelids to wash eye thoroughly.

Electrical Burns

- a. Look for multiple burn sites.
- b. Monitor for cardiac arrest.
- c. Bandage loosely with dry, sterile dressings.
- d. Do not use water to cool the burn.

All Burns

- a. Do not break blisters or remove tissue.
- b. Never use an antiseptic, ointment, spray, or home remedy on a burn.
- c. Elevate burned arm or leg.
- d. Do not remove adhered particles of charred clothing.

9.06 **If witnessing a choking:** If the victim is coughing or talking audibly, do not do anything but stay close to monitor the victim. If the victim is making wheezing sounds or cannot talk and is conscious, however, perform the Heimlich Maneuver by standing behind the victim with arms around the victim's waist. Make a fist with one hand. With the other hand, press the fist against the victim's upper abdomen between the rib cage and navel. With firm, quick thrusts, pull your fist up and inward at a 45-degree angle and monitor for expulsion of the obstruction/food.

- 9.07 **If witnessing bleeding:** Ideally wash hands before putting on gloves. Control severe bleeding by applying pressure directly on the wound. Continue to apply pressure for as long as it takes to stop the bleeding. Apply firm bandages over the wound.
- 9.08 **If witnessing a seizure:** Seizures are very frightful events; however, most patients will cease seizure activity spontaneously. The most important things to remember are:
- Do not try to hold a seizure victim down or control her movements. Instead, keep items away that could hurt her during the seizure (move equipment, furniture, etc.).
 - Do not place anything in her mouth.
 - Keep her head tilted to the side to avoid aspirating vomit/secretions.
 - Maintain an open airway. If you are qualified (and if necessary), render rescue breathing.
 - Call EMS (911) for transport to hospital for evaluation.
 - Look for medical identification cards/bracelets that could indicate a medical condition.
 - Loosen constrictive clothing.
- 9.09 With minor back or limb strain/pain, over the counter medication such as aspirin or ibuprofen is effective in reducing pain and swelling. Follow R.I.C.E. to treat a minor injury or pain.

REST Gentle activity is best for seven days following the pain.

ICE Place ice pack on painful area for 20 minutes, then remove. Repeat every two hours for first 24 to 48 hours.

COMPRESSION Wrap the injured area to compress the soft tissue.

ELEVATION Elevate the injured limb, especially in the first 3 days after the injury.

- 9.10 If a limb is broken and victim must be moved, take time to splint the injured leg or arm. Any straight, firm object may be used as a splint. A tie, belt, or other material can be used to tie the splint in place.

- 9.11 Cover victim and talk calmly to prevent shock. If the victim is in shock, stay with the victim and call 911. If his face is red, raise his head. If his face is pale, raise his legs. Monitor for shock and be prepared to administer CPR.
- 9.12 Give first aid for poisoning or ingestion of harmful chemicals. Call the poison control center before initiating any treatment, 800.764.7661.

Portable Fire Extinguishers— 10.00

A portable fire extinguisher, when used properly, is a tool for protecting lives by putting out small fires or containing them until the fire department arrives. For effective operation, individuals should be trained on how to use various portable fire extinguishers and to check extinguishers routinely.

Fires are categorized into five classifications. A system of letters and standardized symbols are used to define the various fire classes. These same letters and symbols are also employed to define extinguisher types. Always use the correct type of extinguisher for the class of fire being extinguished.

10.01 Extinguisher Types

- Class A**— For ordinary combustibles or fibrous materials, such as wood, cloth, paper, rubber, and many plastics. Basically, any material that leaves ash following incineration is categorized as producing a Class A fire. The extinguishing agent of a Type A extinguisher is water. It cools the ignited material below its ignition temperature and soaks fibers to prevent reignition.
- Class B**— For flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, grease, kerosene, tar, oil-based paint, lacquer, paint thinners, and flammable gasses. Type B extinguishers use various types of substances that remove oxygen and prevent vapors from reaching the ignition source or inhibit the chemical chain reaction.
- Class C**— For energized electrical equipment, including appliances, machinery, wiring, panel boxes, circuit breakers, and power tools. Type C extinguishers use an extinguishing agent that is incapable of conducting electrical current. **The first step in fighting an electrical fire is to de-energize the equipment by turning it off or unplugging it!**
- NOTE**— **Do not use dry chemical-based ABC extinguishers in computer/electronic equipment areas because they can cause corrosion and damage the equipment. Check fire-extinguisher labels for information on what type of extinguishing agent they use.**

Class D— For fires involving combustible metals, such as magnesium, potassium, titanium, and sodium. Specifically designed extinguishing agents that smother Class D fires are used in Type D extinguishers.

Class K— For cooking oil, fat, and grease fires. The class K extinguishers are specifically designed to supplement fire suppression systems in kitchens. **Do not use water to put out grease fires because the water will only spread the burning grease or cooking oil.**

- 10.02 Sound the alarm and notify the local fire authority FIRST. Get first responders en route to the fire.
- 10.03 Be certain everyone has left or is leaving the building.
- 10.04 Portable extinguishers are not designed to fight a large or spreading fire. They are primarily designed for fires that are confined to a small area.
- 10.05 Fire extinguishers are intended for first response only. Never attempt to fight a fire that is growing or a fire between you and an exit.
- 10.06 Make sure that your back is to a safe and unobstructed exit to which the fire will not spread.
- 10.07 Fire extinguishers must be within easy reach, in working order, and fully charged.
- 10.08 Fire extinguishers weighing up to five pounds should be mounted no higher than 60" from the floor to the top of the fire extinguisher.
- 10.09 Fire extinguishers that weigh between 10 and 30 pounds should be mounted no higher than 36" from the floor to the top of the fire extinguisher.
- 10.10 Make sure your extinguisher is the proper size and type for the fire at hand and that you know how to use it.
- 10.11 If unsuccessful in extinguishing a fire, leave immediately, close off the area, and leave the fire for the fire department.
- 10.12 Extinguisher Operations: **PASS**

When fighting a fire with a portable extinguisher, follow the advice of the National Fire Protection Association and remember the word **PASS**.

P — *PULL the pin.* Most extinguishers use a locking pin to prevent inadvertent operation. Pulling the pin unlocks the operating lever to allow discharge operations.

A — *AIM low.* Point the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire, not the upper flames.

S — *SQUEEZE the lever.* A lever below the handle or some other type of triggering device must be engaged to release the extinguishing agent.

S — *SWEEP from side to side.* Use a sweeping motion across the base of the fire and continue discharging the extinguishing agent until the fire appears to be out. Be certain to watch the fire area; if the fire reignites, repeat the process.

Cleaning Safety—400.00

- 400.01 Never leave mops, brushes, or pails in halls, doorways, or areas where someone could trip over them.
- 400.02 Check handles of mops and brooms for proper length. Do not lean into the mopping job; instead maintain erect posture.
- 400.03 Clean floors when traffic is light. Mop one side of a hallway at a time so a dry area is always clear for traffic.
- 400.04 Use “wet floor” signs when mopping floors, cleaning restrooms, and mopping spills. Rope off or barricade slippery areas.
- 400.05 Wet only a small area and then dry mop.
- 400.06 Read the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) before using any chemical.
- 400.07 Empty wastebaskets by turning them upside down instead of reaching in with your hand. This reduces the possibility of getting a cut from sharp objects or broken glass in the wastebasket.
- 400.08 Pick up broken glass with a brush and pan, not with your bare hands. If contaminated with blood, dispose in a sharps container and wash hands thoroughly. (See Section 8 on Bloodborne Pathogens).
- 400.09 Do not try to carry too many cleaning tools up and down stairs. Keep one hand free to use the handrail.
- 400.10 Put water containers or mop buckets on a mobile cart and then fill them with a hose to avoid the need for heavy lifting. When emptying the container refer to Section 2 on Lifting and Handling Techniques.

Use of Equipment Safety—401.00

- 401.01 Do not move heavy equipment around without assistance. If needed, use a dolly or cart.
- 401.02 Do not operate equipment until you have been properly trained and have obtained permission from your supervisor.
- 401.03 Be sure buffing machines are in the “off” position before plugging them in. Hold the buffer with two hands when starting.
- 401.04 Be sure all guards are in place and the area is clear before starting any equipment. Do not disengage a guard except for cleaning and repairing.
- 401.05 Turn off and unplug all equipment before cleaning or repairing.
- 401.06 Do not drive a vehicle or operate a piece of equipment that is defective. Lock defective machinery or equipment so it cannot be used and notify your supervisor.
- 401.07 If equipment is locked out or is tagged out of service, do not use it. Only authorized persons can remove those locks and tags.
- 401.08 Obey warning signs. They are posted for your protection.
- 401.09 Keep a safe work area around operating machinery.
- 401.10 Make sure power cords on sweepers, scrubbers, and polishers are in good condition. If power cords are damaged, tag them out and have defects repaired by an authorized repair person.
- 401.11 Use nonslip waxes approved by the Underwriters Laboratory. Proper application is critical to preventing slip-and-fall accidents.
- 401.12 When using electrical equipment in wet areas use a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) plug and ensure the cords are properly grounded.

Materials Handling and Storage Safety—402.00

- 402.01 Store items in a neat and orderly manner. Place equipment and tools back in their designated storage places when finished.
- 402.02 Wear gloves to protect your hands when moving furniture or sharp materials. Foot protection is required where there is a hazard to your feet.
- 402.03 Do not let extension cords create a tripping hazard in the hallways. Keep them near the wall or tape to the floor.
- 402.04 Do not store combustible items near a heat source such as boilers or electrical equipment.
- 402.05 Do not store materials and supplies in a manner that will block access to electrical panels or block exits. Maintain clear access of at least three feet.
- 402.06 Secure adequate space for storage of all equipment, tools, and supplies.
- 402.07 Ensure shelving is adequate to hold the weight of stored items.
- 402.08 Store heavy and bulky items at waist height. Light items should be stored on upper shelving, and rarely used items on lower shelves. Maintain at least two feet of clearance from the ceiling.
- 402.09 When moving materials on hand trucks or dollies, push rather than pull.
- 402.10 Observe safety procedures (see Section 2) when lifting items from high shelves. Do not use makeshift ladders of any kind. Get a step stool or ladder, and ask someone to assist you.
- 402.11 Do not stand under loads that are suspended. Stand clear when equipment is under tension.
- 402.12 Keep materials clear of aisles to avoid accidents.
- 402.13 Do not allow rubbish or flammable materials to accumulate.
- 402.14 All loose nails, boards, and other protruding objects should be kept off floors where they may present a hazard.
- 402.15 Adequate lighting should be provided for all work areas. If in doubt about lighting, contact your supervisor for evaluation.

Chemical Safety—403.00

- 403.01 Review and have a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) in or near the area where chemicals are to be used. If the manufacturer fails to provide an MSDS, obtain one from the manufacturer before the chemical is used (ask your principal/supervisor).
- 403.02 Only use chemicals if trained and authorized to do so. Follow the manufacturer's directions closely and wear recommended personal protection equipment.
- 403.03 Two employees who are properly trained should be present when handling acid or other hazardous chemicals.
- 403.04 Chemical spills should be cleaned by following MSDS recommendations. Anyone exposed to the spill should seek medical care as soon as possible.
- 403.05 Store and dispose of excess chemicals and empty containers in accordance with manufacturer's label instructions, and state and/or federal laws.
- 403.06 When handling chemicals that can cause skin, nose, and throat irritation upon contact or inhalation, wear proper personal protective equipment. Keep clothing buttoned. Do not wipe face with hands. Do not dump material in a way that raises a cloud of dust. Wash your hands and other exposed body areas thoroughly.
- 403.07 Do not use chemical containers to store materials of any nature other than the original contents. Container labels must accurately describe the chemical in the container.
- 403.08 Always wear proper personal protective equipment when working with chemicals.
- 403.09 When diluting chemicals, fill the bucket with water first and then pour the correct amount of chemical using a designated measuring container. To help avoid splashing, submerge the entire chemical container instead of pouring the chemical into the water.
- 403.10 Neutralize acid or other chemical spills before attempting to clean them up. If the spilled material is unknown, clearly mark the area and leave the spill until the material is identified.

Storage and Handling of Compressed Gas Cylinders—404.00

- 404.01 Store cylinders in an upright position with caps in place. They should be stored in well-ventilated places away from heat.
- 404.02 Fasten cylinders securely so they cannot fall or be knocked over.
- 404.03 Transport cylinders in an approved manner with caps in place.
- 404.04 Use a hand truck and chain fasteners to keep cylinders from being knocked over while in use.
- 404.05 Only cylinders currently in use are permitted in building work areas. Store all empty and spare cylinders in their designated areas.
- 404.06 Before a regulator is removed from a cylinder, the cylinder valve must be closed and all pressure released from the regulator.

Personal Protective Equipment—405.00

- 405.01 Use approved safety glasses, goggles, or face shields when work may result in hazardous exposure to the eyes. Examples of work where eye protection must be worn include when using power tools and transferring or applying chemicals.
- 405.02 Use approved gloves when handling hazardous substances or materials such as wire, wood, or metal.
- 405.03 Wear slip-resistant closed-toe and heel safety shoes.
- 405.04 Wear appropriate respiratory protection, gloves, and apron or special designated protective clothing when exposed to hazardous substances.

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