

news & notes

SYMPTOMS OF EYE STRAIN

Do you experience any of these problems?

- Sore, tired, burning, or itching eyes
- Watery eyes
- Dry eyes
- Blurred or double vision
- Headache and sore neck
- Difficulty shifting focus between monitor and paper documents
- Color fringes or afterimages when you look away from the monitor
- Increased sensitivity to light

If you do, try the tips in "Computer Eyestrain."

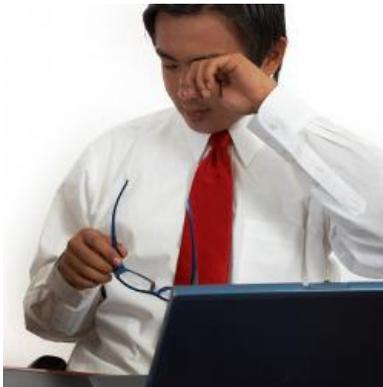
(Source: Mayo Clinic)

DOG DAYS

Have the hot, humid, and hazy days of summer got you down? Even professional baseball players admit to experiencing mental fatigue during the dog days of summer. How do they (and you) cope?

Follow these tips to enjoy the dog days:

- **Keep hydrated** with nonalcoholic, noncaffeinated beverages.
- **Move more slowly** to conserve energy.
- **Rest more.** Heat saps your energy so you need more rest to recharge.
- **Embrace the slower pace** as a welcome break from hectic days.
- **Adopt this time** as an annual recharging season.
- **Realize the slowed-down schedule** is only for a season. Cooler temps and a full schedule are just around the corner.



2011-08

Brush Up On Paint Safety

Paints brighten our world with their rainbow of colors, so we tend not to think of them as being hazardous. But overexposure to any chemical, including those in paints, presents the possibility of health hazards.

What is Paint?

Paint is made up of:

- Pigments - to provide color and in some cases, corrosion resistance.

- Solvents - that dissolve the other paint ingredients and help the paint to set, dry quickly, and flow smoothly.

Common solvents in paints include water, mineral spirits, naphtha, and turpentine.

- Resins - such as polyisocyanates and acrylics, epoxies, and alkyds. Resins bind with other ingredients to leave the paint surface smooth and durable.

- Other chemicals are added to make it easier to apply and clean and to improve weather resistance.

Always read the label on the paint container and material safety data sheets (MSDSs) before you start a paint job.

Health Hazards from Paint

Inhaling too much paint vapor or mist, or getting too much on your skin, can cause problems. These are some of the symptoms that can result from short-term overexposure to paint: Running nose, fatigue, dizziness, eye irritation, sore throat or cough, nausea, skin rashes, and flu-like symptoms (like chills and fever).

Many paint-related health problems show up immediately and stop when exposure to paint stops. However, long-term overexposure to some paints may cause adverse effects to the central nervous system, kidneys, liver, and blood. Some ingredients in paint have even caused cancer or birth defects in laboratory animals.

If you or a fellow worker is overexposed to a paint product, get medical attention as quickly as possible:

- Get to fresh air immediately. Provide oxygen or artificial respiration if necessary.

- For skin contact, remove contaminated clothing, then wash area with soap and water.

- For eye contact, flush with warm water for 15 minutes and get medical attention as soon as possible.

If you use common sense, paints have fairly low physical and health risks.

Protective Measures

Paint spray booths reduce the risk of health problems that are posed by mists and vapors from spray painting by containing the operation and providing necessary ventilation.

Respirators are required in spray booths. A properly fitted air-purifying respirator will protect your throat and lungs. Be sure to change the filters and cartridges in the respirators periodically to keep protected. Check with your supervisor about what type of respirator you may need. When spraying polyurethane and ceratin other paints (especially in confined spaces), you will need a positive-pressure, air-supplying respirator.

Ventilation equipment has to work properly to protect you. If you notice any filters or other items not working properly, report this to your supervisor.

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POWER WORKER SAFETY ETOOL

OSHA says recent deaths have shown the dangers of working with electric power: One worker installing decorative lights on a tree was electrocuted after touching a high-powered overhead electrical line. Another was electrocuted after contacting an overhead high-voltage line with a portable light tower while working on a water main repair.

In fact, OSHA says around 80 workers die from electrical shock each year while working on electrical equipment or related utility operations. To help prevent such fatalities, the agency has published the **Electric Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution Standard eTool**.

The eTool addresses the standard and explains measures to protect workers, which include using PPE and lockout/tagout procedures, and following safety requirements when working on or near power lines. Visit the eTool at www.osha.gov. Click Top Links, then Safety/Health Topics.

MACHINE SAFETY PRACTICES

Follow good practices to stay safe.

- Feed material into the machine with push sticks, not your hands.
- Find a comfortable working position to minimize fatigue.
- Do not rush.
- Follow lockout/tagout procedures.
- Check machines after repair or maintenance to ensure that all guards are back in their proper places.

Machinery can cause injuries, amputations, or even death. Guards can help protect you if you follow safety rules.



Saving Energy at Work

Steps you can take

You can start saving energy on your commute. Each 5 mph over 60 mph you drive is like paying an additional 26¢ per gallon for gas. Don't be an aggressive driver, because it can lower gas mileage by as much as 40 percent. Also, don't idle unnecessarily because it wastes fuel and dollars.

At the computer station, you may be surprised to discover that screen savers don't save energy. A screen saver that displays moving images causes the monitor to consume as much electricity as it does when in active use. A blank screen saver is slightly better, but even that only reduces monitor energy consumption by a small percent. You save energy only if the monitor goes dark, so shut it off when you'll be away from the computer for more than 5 minutes.

There are many other ways to save energy in the workplace. Most of them are fairly common-sense tips, such as:

- Turn off computers, monitors, printers, copiers, and other equipment nightly and on weekends.
- Enable energy saving settings on your computer and other equipment to sleep and hibernate when inactive.
- Use less paper and print less.
- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Encourage co-workers to take energy-saving steps.

Machine Guards

Know how to inspect and use them

Machines cause thousands of serious injuries each year. Danger spots include:

- The point of operation where the machine performs work on material
- Power-transmission apparatuses, such as flywheels, pulleys, belts, chains, couplings, spindles, cams, and gears
- Other moving components, including blades or other cutting parts

Machines have guards and other devices to help protect operators:

- Some guards are fixed and are never removed.
- Interlocked guards can be removed but have shutoff protections.
- Some are adjustable or self-adjusting according to the material being handled.
- Some machines have an automatic shutoff if an operator's body part enters the guarded area.
- Restraint and pull-back devices prevent access by the worker's hands.
- Two-hand control devices require the operator to use both hands.
- Sometimes the entire machine is in a locked area away from the operator.

In general, machine guards must:

- Prevent operator contact with danger spots and not be easily removed.
- Protect against things falling into the guarded area where a small object or tool could cause a jam or malfunction.
- Allow for safe lubrication of the machine without their removal.
- Create no interference with efficient machine operation.