

June 2012

# SAFETY BULLETIN

## SAFETY MESSAGE:

**Summer is almost here, but the hard work for your facilities department is about to begin. Injury risks increase for these employees in the summer. Please review the attached bulletin to help keep them safe. Thank you.**



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To learn more, please review the attachment.

For further training or to schedule a Customized Training Program at a time and location that is convenient to you, contact:

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# SUMMER SAFETY

The school year is nearing the end, but as the students and instructional staff leave for summer break the intensive summer work schedule will start for your facilities staff. In most cases, your facilities staff will do more physically demanding labor over the summer than all the remaining months of the year. The heat, work intensity and compacted schedule can increase the risks of serious injury. Working outdoors and in non-air conditioned buildings increases heat-related stress and injury potential. Moving furniture, equipment, boxes and supplies can lead to back injuries and muscle strains. Floor stripping and waxing significantly increases slip and fall risks and chemical burn issues.

Please have your Facilities Managers and Head Custodians review summer safety procedures with the facilities staff and reinforce the following safety issues:

- When working outside, wear light-weight, light colored clothing and a hat to reduce sun exposure. Use proper sunscreen and reapply periodically. Remember to use polarized safety glasses, not sunglasses, when an impact hazard exists.
- Stay hydrated. It is important to replenish fluids periodically. In high heat or heavy exertion conditions, eight ounces of water (not caffeinated products) every 30 minutes is recommended. Take periodic rest breaks and watch for signs of heat stress such as dizziness, light-headedness, vomiting, clammy skin, etc. Try to perform more physically demanding tasks early in the day.
- Use commercial fans and portable blowers to circulate air in hallways and rooms in non-air conditioned buildings to help employees stay cool in extreme heat conditions.
- Check the weight of boxes and furniture before attempting to lift. Make sure it is something you can safely handle. Use mechanical assist devices when possible, such as forklifts, pallet jacks, hand trucks, furniture movers, rolling chair racks, carts, dollies, etc. or get another employee to help.
- Wear all required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) applicable to the hazards of the work you are performing. Approved safety glasses, safety goggles, protective gloves, dust masks and hearing protection are critical in protecting you. Consider wearing safety shoes to protect against impact.
- When stripping floors, use approved non-slip, chemical-resistant footwear such as neoprene boots, overshoes or disposable shoe covers. Even with this footwear, conditions will be dangerous, so be cautious. Use protective gloves and goggles when handling the liquid stripper.
- Check and inspect power cords and extension cords for equipment to make sure they are in good condition. Do not allow cords to lay in water.
- Use ladders correctly. Make sure step ladders have four points of contact and spreaders are fully opened and locked. Do not lean outside the rails of the ladder to minimize fall potential.



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**HAVE A SAFE AND INJURY-FREE SUMMER!**

