

SAFETY NOTICE

END OF SCHOOL YEAR SAFETY

As the end of the school year rapidly approaches, it is easy to forget about safety. However, the JIF has experienced many significant claims in the final days of school including slips and falls, back injuries and falls from elevated surfaces. Please remind your staff to be careful as the end of year activities and clean-outs occur. No one wants to start their summer off with an injury. Below are a few reminders to help keep everyone safe.

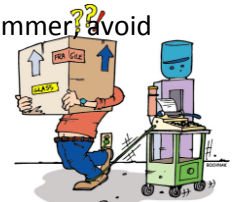
Watch that Trash!

Ask teachers to refrain from overloading trash cans and boxes with heavy items, including text books. Remember, someone has to lift that bag, box or can to get it out of there. Make sure custodial staff provides an adequate number of trash cans in each area. Have them monitor the cans closely and tie off trash bags when one-third to one-half full, then place another bag on top. This will keep the bags at a reasonable weight.



Beware the Boxes!

This time of year, there is a tendency to overload boxes that are stored on shelves and in closets. This can increase injury risks to facilities staff that will be cleaning the rooms during the summer. Additionally, people will load boxes with personal items to take home for the summer. Remind people to keep the weight manageable and consider having material handling equipment, like hand trucks and carts, available for larger and heavier items. And while we are entering the lazy days of summer, avoid carrying a "Lazy Man's Load" that can obstruct your vision and increase injury risks.



Step Up!

Taking down all those posters, hanging art work and other dangling objects around the classroom can be tedious. Doing it while balanced on a chair, desk or box can be downright dangerous. Make sure proper stepstools and stepladders are readily available and utilized by the employees



Fear the Footwear!

This is the time of year when more casual footwear finds its way out of the closet and into the schools. Please remember that open-toed and open-heeled footwear including sandals and flip-flops can significantly increase the risks of slips, falls and impact injuries. Also, many of these types of shoes have smooth soles that can increase slip risks.



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Don't Be a Party Animal!

End of year parties and Fun Days for staff and students are common and can be a great time. However, be cautious of the events you choose to include, especially activities with an athletic component. This can increase risks of injury to staff that may not normally participate in these activities. If outside vendors are being utilized for services, do not forget to obtain Certificates of Insurance.

Beat the Heat!

There are many times when this region can experience a heat wave before school ends. This can create serious safety issues for staff and students related to outdoor activities and non-air conditioned buildings. Districts may need to consider modifying their schedules and reducing or eliminating outdoor activities. If you have a two-story building, you may need to consider relocating classes to first floor locations, if possible. Provide cold water stations around the building and place fans in strategic locations to create cross-ventilation.



Keys Please!

Teachers should make sure they have unlocked any storage cabinets, filing cabinets and desk drawers before leaving. Facilities staff must be able to remove heavy items from these types of furniture in order to move them out of the room safely. Locking jam-packed cabinets significantly increases the injury risks to these employees when they are cleaning the rooms. Leave them unlocked or leave the keys.

Keep it Down!

Do not store materials too high on shelves and cabinet tops. Fire codes require a minimum of 24 inches of clearance to the ceiling and a minimum of 18 inches to the underside of any fire sprinkler heads. Also, storing items high on shelves increases back injury risks to anyone that must move them.

See You in September!

Remember to let the teachers know when they can return at the end of summer to set up their rooms. You do not want unauthorized staff walking through the building when activities such as floor polishing or construction are still being done. Communication is the key to ensuring everyone stays safe.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!



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**If you need any additional information
or assistance on this matter, please
contact the JIF Safety Director**