

TOWN OF READING

SAFETY MANUAL



Adopted May 2004

TOWN OF READING SAFETY MANUAL

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Town of Reading to provide and maintain safe, healthful working conditions, a safe and healthy community, and to promote continuing safety awareness at all levels.

It is the responsibility of each employee to follow safe practices as a part of all operations, and employees are expected to follow every precaution and safety rule to protect themselves, their fellow workers, and the general public.

This policy illustrates our recognition of the fact that accident prevention and operation are synonymous.

GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

It is not possible to prescribe detailed standards of application for all situations that may arise. Therefore, minimum standards are presented for the most common situations with the understanding that additional protection must be provided where special complexities and hazards prevail. Although each situation must be dealt with individually, conformity with the minimum provisions established is required. The following general rules apply to all departments:

1. Illegal possession, consumption, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or narcotics on Town or School property, or while in the employ of the Town, is prohibited.
2. The smoking of tobacco products is prohibited within Town and School buildings, on School property, and in Town and School vehicles.
3. Seat belts must be worn when operating or riding in Town or School vehicles in which seat belts are provided, and in personal vehicles when on Town business.
4. Horseplay and practical jokes are prohibited.
5. Walk up and down stairs staying to the right - one at a time - and always use caution. If a railing is available, use it!
6. Be alert for tripping hazards.
7. Do not move so fast that you cannot stop without causing an accident should someone unexpectedly step in front of you. Watch where you are going.
8. When using electrical equipment, make sure it is plugged into a grounded outlet.
9. Do not use portable electric heaters, fans, or other appliances unless they have been approved by the Building Maintenance Department. Do not leave any such equipment plugged in when no-one is present.
10. See that electrical cords are not in the way of your work and are in good repair.
11. All electric equipment must be grounded. Do not use any electric equipment that is not grounded unless the item is of a double-insulated type.
12. Do not attempt any electrical equipment repairs unless authorized and trained in such repair. Only qualified licensed electricians shall work on electrical equipment or maintain energized lines.

13. Report all unusual electrical conditions to your supervisor immediately; for example blown fuses, sparking or smoking motors and worn extension cords.
14. Do not leave any machine running when not in use.
15. No tools, material, or equipment are to be left lying on the floor in walk paths or exits.
16. All tools are to be put back in their proper places, cleaned, and in good working condition.
17. Every accident or injury, no matter how slight, must be reported to your supervisor and the Personnel Office at Town Hall immediately.
17. Do not attempt to operate equipment you do not understand. Equipment does not cause accidents; it is the people who are using it.
18. Wear proper shoes with full protection of the heel and toes. Watch for worn heels, for they can result in some serious falls. We encourage slip-resistant soles.
19. Make sure you know where fire extinguishers are in your work area, and how to use them.
20. Emergency exits must be kept clear at all times.
21. Never place anything on or in front of fire extinguishers, electrical panels, and/or fire doors.
22. Do not block heaters, air vents, or air intakes.
23. Use a proper height ladder or stool, not a box, desk or chair, to reach high places and avoid, if possible, carrying material up or down ladders. Put light items on higher shelves.
24. Never pour flammable or hazardous liquids or materials down drains or sewers.
25. Dispose of all flammable and hazardous waste rags in metal containers with lids provided for this purpose, or in an approved area.
26. Change your clothing immediately should it become soaked with any flammable liquid.
26. Employees should report any unsafe conditions to their supervisor to schedule repairs.

HOUSEKEEPING IN THE LAB OR SHOP

1. Clean up and dispose of all spills, and especially spilled chemicals, promptly and properly.
2. Store and label all chemicals according to recommended procedures.
3. Keep all equipment used for handling or storing chemicals free of dust and chemical residues.
4. Chemicals should be fully inventoried at least annually. Old and/or unused chemicals must be disposed of on a regular basis in an appropriate and approved manner.

HOUSEKEEPING IN THE OFFICE

1. Keep aisles clear. Keep walkways between desks and work spaces free of boxes, cords, plants, etc.
2. Close drawers when not in use. Be sure to close the drawer of the desk or filing cabinet you are using after you finish and before opening another one.
3. Keep desktops neat. Desk and table tops should be kept well organized when in use, and they should be cleaned off at end of the workday.
4. Store and stack safely. Never store objects, especially heavy ones, where they are hard to reach or liable to fall.
5. Put away sharp objects. Safely store scissors, knives and letter openers as soon as you are finished with them.

MATERIAL HANDLING SAFETY

Manual Lifting

The first rule for any manual handling job is use your head. Before you lift, attempt to estimate the weight of the object. If you are not sure, squat down and try lifting a corner. If you do not feel comfortable about the lift or it feels too heavy, do not lift it! Find some help. Ask someone else to help you or, better yet, locate a handtruck or other lifting device to aid you. Once you have decided that you can lift the object, there are several basic steps that should be followed in making a proper lift.

1. First, position your feet - preferably one along side of the object to be lifted and the other behind you. This will provide the balance necessary for a smooth lift.
2. Second, tighten your stomach muscles by pulling in your stomach and straighten your back to keep your spine, back muscles, and ligaments in correct alignment. This will evenly distribute the load over the entire spine. Remember, a straight back does not necessarily mean a vertical back. Your back can still be straight even if you are lifting at an angle.
3. Third, bend your hips and knees by using the sit-down position and draw the object in close to your body. Bending at your hips will aid in keeping your back straight and bending your knees will allow you to lift with your legs.
4. Fourth, grasp the object by the opposite corners and position your body so its weight is centered over your feet. Tuck in your chin.
5. Start the lift with a thrust of the rear foot and remember that as you lift, use smooth movements and avoid jerking.
6. Once the load has been lifted, keep the load close to your body and turn the entire body as a whole unit, including the feet. Remember, do not twist!

Stooping

1. Stand close to the object.
2. Place feet apart with one foot in front of the other so you have a firm footing for the task to be performed.
3. Bend your knees and hips, lower your body, keep your back straight and bring your hands down to the object.

Carrying

1. Keep your back as straight as possible.
2. Keep weight load close to the body and centered over your pelvis.
3. Counter-balance your load by shifting part of your body in the opposite direction from the load so your load will be in balance.
4. Put your load down by bending the hips and knees with your back straight and load close to the body.
5. If the load is too heavy, get help.
6. When a load is carried by more than one person, allow one individual to be the leader so you have good timing and coordination.

Pushing

1. Stand close to the object being moved.
2. Crouch down with feet apart.
3. Bend your elbows and put your hands on the load at chest level.
4. Lean forward with chest or shoulder against the object. Do not push with arms or shoulders.
5. Keep your back straight. Crouch and push with your legs.

Reaching

1. Use a stepladder or platform (preferably with railings) whenever possible.
2. Stand close to the object. Keep center of gravity over the base of support.
3. When reaching from the ground, place your feet wide apart, one in front of the other so you have freedom of movement forward and backward as arms are raised and lowered.
4. Keep good body alignment. Move close to the object. Do not reach outward to the point of straining.
5. When reaching for an object which is above your head, grip it with the palms up and lower it slowly. Keep it close to your body on the way down.

Standing

1. Standing for long periods with both feet flat on the floor can produce strain-inducing swayback. Use a low stool or other elevation to periodically raise one foot off the floor. This relieves pressure on the lower back.

Sitting

1. When sitting, sit in chairs low enough to place both feet on the floor with knees higher than the hips. You may cross your legs or put your feet up on a stool. Sit firmly against the back of the chair.

FIRE PREVENTION

It is important to use the right type of fire extinguisher if you are forced to put out a fire. Read and remember these symbols and the types of fire extinguishers on which they are found. If you should be faced with an actual fire, you may not have time to read this information. Read it now while you have the time.

The symbols below indicate that the fire extinguisher is designed for combustibles such as cloth, wood, paper, rubber, etc. The background color of the symbol will be either metallic or green. This type of fire extinguisher contains either water, multipurpose dry chemicals, carbon dioxide or foam.



Ordinary
Combustibles



Ordinary
Combustibles

The symbols below indicate that the fire extinguisher is designed for flammable or combustible liquids, gases, greases, oil, etc. The background color of this symbol is either metallic or red. This type of fire extinguisher contains multipurpose dry chemicals or carbon dioxide.



Flammable
Liquids



Flammable
Liquids

The symbols below indicate that the fire extinguisher is designed for use on electrical equipment. The background color of the symbol is either metallic or blue. This type of fire extinguisher contains either multipurpose dry chemicals or carbon dioxide.



Electrical
Equipment



Electrical
Equipment

FALL PREVENTION

Falls are one of the most common kind of accident. Preventing a fall and injury to yourself is your responsibility.

1. When it is necessary to climb, use a ladder- not a chair, stool, desk or box.
2. Wear sturdy shoes with non-slip soles that are in good condition.
3. Use the handrail when going up or down stairs. Be especially careful if carrying an item while on the stairway.
4. In winter, be on the alert for slippery outdoor sidewalks and steps.
5. Help others. Report tripping hazards, loose handrails, steps in poor condition, slippery indoor steps.

ACCIDENTS ARE CAUSED BY UNSAFE ACTS AND CONDITIONS.

You are the most important factor in the elimination of unsafe acts. This set of safety rules is for your guidance in patterning your safe practice procedure. Your acceptance of these rules is a condition of your contract of employment here, and your signature indicates that you have received, read, understand and agree to abide by these safety rules.

We welcome any suggestions you may have that will enhance our accident prevention program. Direct any suggestions or comments to the Human Resources Office at the Town Hall.

*Adopted by
Peter I. Hechenbleikner
Town Manager
5-26-04*