

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

FIRE PREVENTION AT WORK

If a fire breaks out, it poses threats to property and lives, and in the right conditions it can quickly go from a small containable flame to an inferno. While it is important to prepare in advance for what to do if a fire breaks out, the best course of action is to prevent the fire from starting in the first place. Here are some easy ways to lessen the chance of a fire at your workplace:

- ❖ Keep workspaces clear of extraneous items. A tidy, uncluttered workspace not only provides less fuel for a fire but also helps keep the path to a safe exit clear. Keeping your space clean and free of dust and lint will also reduce the amount of possible fuel.
- ❖ Keep decorations such as paper on walls or items hanging from the ceiling to a minimum (less than 25% of wall space) to prevent the easy spread of fire.
- ❖ Check electrical cords regularly and immediately stop using any cord that shows signs of damage. Plug cords directly into the wall outlet; never chain cords (plugging one cord into another cord). Place these out of walkways since traffic over cords can lead to damage.
- ❖ If you have the need for more outlets, always use a surge protector rather than a standard power strip in case of a power surge. Prevent overloading by making sure that the combined wattage of all items plugged into the surge protector does not exceed its maximum capacity. Unplug the surge protector when it is not being used.
- ❖ Follow District policy for space heaters. If they are allowed, check the heater for damage before use. Plug it directly into the wall outlet (not a power strip or extension cord) and place it on a flat, level, non-flammable surface out of the way of foot traffic. Keep three feet of clearance between the heater and other flammable items, and never leave it unattended when it is on. If you notice sparks or a burning smell, immediately unplug the space heater and discontinue its use. Unplug the heater before leaving for the day.

This also applies to other personal appliances, such as microwaves and fridges.

- ❖ Oil, solvents, and other flammable liquids should be stored in a proper flammables cabinet when not in use. Never store or use incompatible chemicals together as their combination could lead to combustion or explosion. Used oily or solvent-soaked rags should be stored in a proper metal container with a self-closing lid.



Helping to keep our member's employees safe! This Safety Spotlight brought to you by: