

REMOTE WORKER INSPECTION GUIDELINES - 4/18

The following information can be applied to any alternative work arrangement. It is provided to assist you in designing, establishing, adjusting, and/or inspecting your workstation at the alternate work site. An adequate workstation and area should be safe and comfortable and should facilitate your job performance.

The following guide will familiarize you with many of the desirable aspects as well as hazards in an office work environment. If you suspect that something is hazardous, but are not sure, you can contact your Manager for assistance. It is recommended that you maintain this Guide as a reference.

WORKING OR WALKING SURFACES

Surfaces should be level and free of tripping, bumping, or slipping hazards. Watch out for: torn carpet; electrical or telephone cords in walkways; partition support brackets, waste baskets, portable heaters, fans, boxes or other items in walkway, protruding file cabinets, etc.; file cabinet drawers and/or bookcase doors that open into an aisle; mis-aligned furniture; temporary or permanent storage that narrows or obstructs aisles; doors that open into aisles or narrow halls, etc. Ensure outdoor walkways are maintained during weather so as not to create slip/trip/fall hazards outside, and inside the work area due to snow/rain/mud, etc.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

There are numerous safety considerations involved in the use of electrically powered equipment and appliances. These center around three hazards-shock, burns, and fire. Do not overload circuits or

Grounding: Generally, most homes are provided with three-wire grounded electrical outlets. You should look for cracked or broken outlets, missing covers which expose the wiring or signs of arcing or burns around the outlet.

As a general rule, if an appliance comes from the manufacturer with a three-prong plug, the ground pin should not be broken off. Nor should the device be used ungrounded via a two-prong adapter or extension cord. Large appliances, such as refrigerators, computers, printers/copiers, as well as heating devices such as coffee pots and hot plates should be grounded. If you have any doubt about a particular device, contact your Manager.

Electrical Cords: Appliance and equipment cords should be checked on a regular basis for proper connection to the device, frayed or damaged insulation, defective plug, and exposed wires. The use of extension cords in the workplace should be limited and closely controlled. Extension cords are to be used only on a "temporary basis." If the condition where they are used calls for "long term use," then electrical outlets should be moved or added, or other corrective action taken.

Try rearranging the furniture or adding additional electrical outlets before using extension cords. When they are used, they should be of the same or larger wire size as the cord being extended and have a compatible connector plug. If an adapter is needed to connect the device to an extension cord, the wrong extension cord is being used.

Caution: Extension cords must never be draped over furniture, partitions, equipment, or extended across aisles, walkways, doors, walls, or ceiling, or located under carpeting.

Electrical Outlets: A major cause of fire is overloaded electrical circuits. This usually occurs through the use of multiple outlet adapters or extension cords with a multiple outlet connector. Limit the number of devices connected to any outlet to the number of receptacles provided by the outlet. If additional outlets are needed, they should be properly installed by a qualified electrician.

FIRE PROTECTION

Are there fire extinguishers; alarm systems; fire hoses and stand pipe systems; smoke detectors; sprinkler systems; and heat detectors. Where they exist, all must be maintained in proper working order at all times to ensure safety.

STORAGE

Do not store any items on top of tall furniture or cabinets. A good practice is to limit storage height to maintain a minimum of 18 inches clearance from the ceiling, light fixtures, and other electrical equipment.

HEATERS

Care should be exercised when using portable heaters. Be sure that the heating element is guarded against accidental contact, positioned away from furniture or other combustibles, and that a tip-over switch cuts off electrical power to the heating element if the heater is knocked over. This feature could prevent the heater from starting a fire. Kerosene heaters should not be used in the home.

COFFEE POTS OR SIMILAR ITEMS

Coffee pots and similar items should be placed out of normal walk areas and on a noncombustible surface. Never place such a device in a storeroom, closet, or other location where it cannot be observed, because it might smolder, start a fire, and spread before being detected. Should an electrical short-circuit occur, quick action (turning power off) is necessary to prevent fire. Be sure that all of these types of electrical equipment are turned off at the end of the day. Use of immersion-type water heaters, for coffee or tea cups, should be avoided.

RADIATORS

Some older homes use radiators for heat instead of the more modern forced air systems. If your home work area has radiators, be sure not to place combustibles or flammable articles on or near them. Also check to assure that electrical power cords are not allowed to "drape" across them.

WORKSTATIONS

In the office environment, the work station consists primarily of a work surface of some type, a chair, video display terminals (VDT's) and other related items. Individual body size must be considered and will influence the design of the chair, the height of the work surface and access to various elements of the work station, including the video display section. A height-adjustable work surface is an advantage. In general, a good VDT work surface will provide as many adjustable features as possible.

The following are some tips on the use and design of typical workstations:

- Sit up straight, keeping your neck as nearly vertical as comfortable. Improper neck, arm, and wrist positioning are typical causes for strains, other injuries, and discomfort.
- Position computer screen at an arm's length from your face and slightly below eye level.
- Use pads or other devices to comfortably support your wrists when using a keyboard. Keep your arms and wrists straight.
- Avoid extreme angles, keep to neutral angles for ankles, knees, elbows, wrists, fingers, neck, head.
- Take regular breaks to change positions, stand up, look away from the monitor, blink, stretch.

VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS (MONITORS)

"Video display terminals," commonly referred to VDTs or monitors, display information on a Visual impairment can result from improper lighting, glare from the screen, positioning of the screen, or copy material that is difficult to read. VDT operators can reduce eyestrain by temporarily looking away from the VDT, doing eye exercises, switching to other work, or adjusting the brightness of the VDT screen.

VDT operators are subject to the risk of developing various musculoskeletal and nerve disorders, such as cumulative or repetitive motion disorders. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), a cumulative trauma disorder, is caused by repetitive wrist-hand movement and exertion. When irritated, the tendons and their sheaths housed inside the carpal tunnel swell and press against the nearby median nerve. The pressure causes tingling, numbness, or severe pain in the wrist and hand. CTS can be reduced by stopping or limiting VDT activity, by maintaining proper posture, or, as a last resort, surgery. Report any suspected symptoms immediately to your manager. Early medical reporting is key to early intervention and prevention of serious injuries.

THE DESK

The height of the work surface should be comfortable for typical uses (computer work, writing, or reading). Conventional desk surfaces are usually about 29 inches high. The height recommended for a computing surface is approximately 26 inches.

THE CHAIR

The chair is probably the most important piece of furniture in your work station. The seat should be adjustable and the height (measured from the floor) of the top surface of the seat should be 15 to 21 inches. The backrest should be adjustable (height and angle) and should provide support for the telecommuter's lower back. Arm rests should be substantial enough to provide support, but not so large as to be in the way. Your legs should be parallel to the chair. It should have 5 runs and casters in good condition.

LIGHTING

The lighting in your workstation can affect comfort, visibility, and performance. Whether you're using natural daylight or artificial lighting, it should be directed toward the side or behind your line of vision, not in front or above it. Bright light sources can bounce off working surfaces and diminish your sense of contrast. Northern daylight is the best light for your workstation and for operating a computer.

SECURITY

Do not allow non-company or non-authorized employees to operate or repair company-owned equipment. Ensure equipment and sensitive documents are properly stowed, locked or otherwise guarded on site, and also in your vehicle during transportation. Always keep company files and information in a secure place and do not advertise your home office to strangers.

INCIDENT REPORTING

Always report ALL incidents, accidents and injuries, suspicious emails, suspected hacking, etc. immediately to your supervisor. I have read and will comply with the office safety guidelines
