



SAFETY FIRST

PERRY TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER MAY 2019

ARE YOU CHANGING ROOMS?

Many Perry staff members will move locations before the next school year begins. Others are retiring or just moving on. With those moves comes the dreaded job of loading boxes and physically moving them. Whether you are a classroom teacher, aide, secretary, or custodian, please use common sense and caution. Here are a few important reminders.

Tips for School Personnel: Year-end Classroom Closings

As we approach the end of the school year, probably the last thing you are worrying about is being injured. One of the most critical times of year for employee injuries is the last few days of school, when there is a mad rush to clean-up your classroom or work area. This often involves trying to box up and carry as much as you can from your classroom to your car, without making too many trips.

Consider these accidents facts before you begin your move: slip, trips and falls account for more than 60% of all injuries in schools today and at least 50% of the medical costs. Most injuries in this cause group are not from wet floors as most people imagine, but from human error. Nearly 54% of all injuries in this cause group involve some type of human error. Human error is defined as poor judgment by the individual, rushing or complacency. Consider the following:

- Think about what you have to move before you begin the process. This may include utilizing hand carts, and how many trips you might have to make to your car, the shoes and clothing needed. Do this the day before and plan ahead.
- Don't rush the process!
- No matter what you carry have one hand free to grasp handrails, and to break your fall if you would happen to lose your balance.
- Use carts to move loads so you avoid moving too much material at once.
- Break down loads if you are not using a hand cart, so you can see where you are walking, particularly on steps or curbs.

- Avoid wearing heels, platforms or shoes that have leather soles.
- Wear loose or comfortable clothing.
- Try and limit the distance of your move, by moving your vehicle closer to the curb and not the lot, if it's possible!
- If you need help with heavy or cumbersome items, don't be afraid to ask for help.

Provided courtesy of:

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Additional Tips:

Lifting Safety

Moving objects from one place to another is a common task. Pushing, pulling and lifting can be done effortlessly and safely with thoughtful planning. Know your physical limits and remember these guidelines.

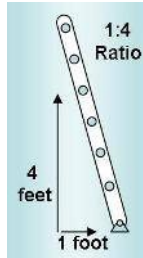
1. Ask for help for large jobs. Your custodian has the equipment that will enable a safe move.
2. Be realistic when assessing the load. **Plan the move in your mind before you begin the physical task.** If you **think** the load is too bulky or heavy, it is!
3. Never store heavy objects higher than your shoulders. Lifting even the lightest objects over one's head puts additional strain on the back.
4. Ask for assistance or break the load into smaller, more manageable sizes.
5. Warm-up your back and leg muscles. Learn some simple stretching exercises.
6. In preparation for lifting, stand close to the object with your feet about a shoulder width apart.
7. Squat down, bending at the hips and knees. Keep your back straight and rise looking forward.
8. Grip the load, arch your lower back inward and rise slowly. Again, keep the load close to your body.
9. **Avoid** twisting your torso while carrying a load. **Turn your whole body** in the direction you want to go. Twisting places additional stress and strain on the spine and back muscles.
10. To lower the load, **squat first**, bending naturally at the hips and knees. Keep your lower back arched inward.

Ladder Safety

Ladders are a common and useful tool. Their hazards are easily overlooked, so be careful. Keep these rules in mind when using ladders:

- Ask your custodian for the proper ladder for the job.
- Use a ladder when the job requires it. **Chairs, boxes and desks are not ladders and are unsafe to stand on.**

- Use the correct ladder for the job. There are numerous types of ladders. Make sure you choose the right ladder for the job you are to perform.
- Inspect the ladder **BEFORE** you use it. Check the rungs, spreaders and side rails before use. Never use a damaged ladder.
- Use common sense when working on ladders. Never lean or reach too far to either side; move the ladder if necessary. Check for slippery surfaces and uneven footing.
- Climb and descend ladders **CAUTIOUSLY**. Face the ladder and hold on with **BOTH** hands. Carry tools on a tool belt or raised and lowered using a hand line.
- Check your shoes for slippery substances.



Newest member of the Perry Township Schools Employee Safety Committee:

Bill Dreibelbis, former teacher at the RISE Learning Center (1986-1989); former teacher at Perry Meridian High School (1989-1991); and former Director of RISE Special Services (2005-2011) and retired Director of Exceptional Learners from the MSD of Lawrence Township (December 2017) joined the Perry Township Schools team as the district Employee Safety Specialist during the spring of 2019 (position formerly held by Mr. Ken George).

Tips From Recent Employee Accidents of note:

1. When interacting with a student who needs to be calmed, please remember that CPI training tells us to utilize de-escalation strategies as the first course of action whenever possible; and, always be mindful of space & proximity if hands-on intervention is warranted;
2. Please be cautious and very aware of your path, steps, and gait when walking up and down steps of any kind;
3. As you are walking anywhere (inside or outside) please always pay attention to your surroundings and your pace, and for goodness sakes do not walk and text/email on your phone;
4. If you are in an employee group that requires non-slip shoes, please make sure that the shoes you wear at work are in fact non-slip (the recommended guideline would be ASTM rated shoes); if you have any questions about this requirement please refer to the SHOE REQUIREMENTS section of the Support Staff Handbook;
5. It is imperative that all employees use proper equipment to reach items on high shelves (tables, round-top stools, chairs that rock, etc. are NOT proper equipment);
6. As you work in the kitchen areas, please remember to wear your protective equipment around hot surfaces, boiling grease, when using sharp utensils, etc.; and
7. Lifting heavy items by yourself could lead to dropping that item potentially causing injury to your lower extremities....please seek assistance when lifting/moving heavy items.

SEVEN (7) OF TWELVE (12) ACCIDENTS REPORTED IN APRIL AND MAY WERE THE RESULT OF SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS!!!