



Lead Story

Get with the program

Ways to sell and resell safety

By **KARIN WILSON**
FOR COMFORT ZONE

In today's media savvy marketplace, it's tough slogging to get a decent sale. But try selling safety to your employees. Now that's a real challenge. Like issues of health, the environment, even economic development – safety messages fall under the large category “social marketing” and in order to be effective, anyone who delivers these messages needs to be aware of their “target.”

“Usually we're looking at emotionally-based messages,” said Michael Mulvey, an associate professor of marketing at the University of Ottawa's School of Management.

But as all too many health and safety managers know, dealing with internal staff who already feel they know everything requires more than a bit of finesse. As a result, some of the extreme messages don't fly.

“Some might say fear appeals, but it's a dual edged sword,” he said. “It can facilitate behavioural change, but it can also act as a turn-off.”

In other words, warning workers against workplace carelessness with images of ambulance sirens, tearful faces, coffins and emotional breakdowns isn't going to cut it.

“You have to realize they know it all. They know the chemicals are dangerous, they know they need to use eye protection. The challenge then is to find consequences they haven't thought about, or change the playing field of those consequences.”

In recent years, Mulvey has seen the trend turn towards trying to make safety “cool.” This has been achieved through various campaigns that play the worker as the fool no one wants to be.

Mulvey refers to a series of St. John Ambulance ads that ran three years ago. One featured a man making repeated attempts to light his barbeque with lighter fluid. Just as the picture fades to black, the viewer hears a large inevitable bang.

Another television commercial featured a man in a delicatessen explaining to a teenager how to slice the meat. The teenager nods distractedly. Before the man leaves



Welcome to The Zone!

Skilven Publications' *Comfort Zone* is more than a newsletter. It's an educational information package designed to keep you in the know as well as help you convey important safety, health and security information to your staff. *Comfort Zone* contains special sections written just for you including:

* **Safety Applications** - articles to assist you apply good supervisory techniques
* **Legislation Update** - articles to keep you up to speed on safety and health legislation across the country

* **Safety Making Headlines** - current articles and information relevant to your working world

* **Bits and Pieces** - a catch-all section filled with interesting health-related facts and information

Sections for your employees include:

* **Health and Safety Minute** - a handout sheet you can distribute to your staff to provide them with useful tips and information

* **Safety Meeting** - A five minute safety meeting complete with a hand out, quiz and sign-in sheet to ensure you are adhering to required safety regulations.

It's all here in one package, delivered to your computer every month. Enjoy this sample issue!

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S a f e t y M a k i n g H e a d l i n e s

Workplace solvent exposure affects unborn

Children whose mothers were exposed during pregnancy to on-the-job solvents like paint or dry-cleaning fluids score lower on tests for IQ, language and cognitive skills than other kids their age, a Canadian study has found.

While the differences between exposed children and their peers were “relatively mild” and parents reported no major problems deeper investigation of specific functions showed lower achievements according to the study.

The children also had a greater propensity for being hyperactive and impulsive.

The study, published in the October issue of the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, looked at the children of 32 women enrolled in the Motherisk program in the late 1980s. All had been working around organic solvents, including in medical labs, hair salons, funeral homes where embalming was performed, in factories, dry-cleaners and photography studios.

The women, who reported wearing masks and other protective gear, all worked through at least their first trimester of pregnancy and often up to 40 weeks. The average exposure to the various chemicals was about 28 weeks. Studies have shown that adults who breathe in fumes or absorb solvents through the skin can suffer neurological dysfunction, from lowered IQ to lack of co-ordination to vision problems — including the loss of colour recognition. In 1999 the children

aged three to nine were given a number of tests for IQ, language and other cognitive skills. Parents were asked to fill out questionnaires on their child’s behaviour and progress. All results were compared to “normal ranges” for kids in the same age brackets and from families with similar socioeconomic backgrounds.

The researchers found children exposed to chemicals while in the womb did not process information as well as their peers, had not progressed with language as well and had poorer recall, he said. IQ was slightly affected, but not enough to put the child at risk of not doing well in school.

“We also saw greater inattention and hyperactivity in the exposed children,” said Dr. Dionne Laslo-Baker, a Sick Kids’ psychologist and a study co-author.

Dr. Vyta Senikas, a spokeswoman for the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada, said that with just 32 participants, the study is too small to be definitive. Further research on larger numbers of children is needed to confirm the results.

Canada’s Treasury Board, which oversees federal and federally regulated employees, says a pregnant woman can ask to be transferred out of her job or have it modified if it poses a threat to her fetus, a spokeswoman for Health Canada said from Ottawa. For employees in private industry, workplace safety legislation differs from province to province.

Bill C-45 now in force to help provide safer working environment

As of March 30, Bill C-45 or the Westray Bill has been in force. Organizations like the IAPA and the CCOHS are providing detailed information on how it affects you. Here is a quick review of some of the provisions the Bill includes:

- Imposition of legal duties on employers and those who direct work to take reasonable measures to protect employee and public safety;

- If this duty is carelessly disregarded and bodily harm or death results, an

organization could be charged with criminal negligence;

- Organizations may be found guilty of “negligence” if a “representative” is a party to the offence, or a “senior officer” (or officers) who is (are) responsible for the aspect of the organization’s activities that is relevant to the offence departs “markedly” from the standard of care to prevent a representative of the organization from being a party to the offence.

- Most importantly: “[e]very one

who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task.”

- The fine for a “summary conviction” has been increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000. There is no ceiling for fines on indictable or more serious offences. Fines of up to \$1,000,000 are provided for breach of the Canada Labour Code.

The information presented in Comfort Zone has been compiled from sources believed to be reliable. However, it cannot be assumed that all acceptable measures are contained in this article nor that additional measures may not be required under particular or exceptional circumstances, or your own company procedures, or by federal, state/provincial and local law. Local, state/provincial and federal regulations take precedence over this material. We reserve the

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S a f e t y M a k i n g H e a d l i n e s

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Ways to sell and resell safety

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to help a customer he says once more, “don’t forget to keep the guard down.” Over the fade to black, the machine starts up, and the viewer knows it isn’t pretty.

“What they’re doing is casting the main character as an anti-hero, someone who is socially undesirable. The idea is that this creates a category of people who say to themselves, they don’t want to be a loser.”

Mulvey said the other challenge in the workplace is fending off cynicism among those who say the safety message is really aimed at saving the employer money.

Mulvey said the only way to combat this is through acknowledgement, and then outline that the employee benefits as well. In otherwise – a win-win.

Potential consequences might be:

- Loss of income
- Loss of ability
- A lifetime of questions from

strangers

- Loss of career
- Increased risk of family breakup
- Depression

Mulvey said the best thing to do is keep the list realistic, but succinct.

“Don’t catalogue all the potential consequences. Try to find a balance. If you overwhelm your employees you’re not likely to motivate them.”

Finally, Mulvey said don’t be seduced by fancy media images – an expensive TV ad can be a complete waste of money, a simple poster can be very effective. Here the message, not the media, rules.

“Ultimately avoid messages that communicate extremes or aim to scare people to death,” he said. Instead, work on showing how one simple mistake can have far-reaching and sometimes unexpected effects.

Mulvey recalls an ad that showed a young woman reviewing options with her plastic surgeon. The ad ends with the surgeon asking: “so when are you going out drinking and driving again”

“Some things are almost worse than death.”

■ The lead article of Comfort Zone covers the latest buzz in the safety and health arena in Canada. Previous articles have included bullying, an interview with Rick Mercer who was last year’s keynote speaker at IAPA, and raising safety awareness among young workers. Our editors always welcome new ideas for our lead story. Email ideas to editor@skilven.ca



Don't catalogue all the potential consequences. Try to find a balance. If you overwhelm your employees, you're not likely to motivate them.

- Michael Mulvey



Follow manufacturers' instructions when using ladders

An electrician was fatally injured when he fell from a 16 ft. aluminum tripod ladder (an orchard ladder). The ladder was erected on an epoxy-coated concrete floor inside a storage garage. The front single post slid forward and the ladder collapsed with the electrician on it. He suffered severe head injuries as a result of the fall and died 46 hours after the incident.

Safe work practices:

- * Follow manufacturers' instructions at all times.
- * Use the right type of ladder for the job.
- * Ensure ladders are equipped with anti-skid feet when used on smooth surfaces.
- * Never use aluminum ladders adjacent to live electrical conductors.

- B.C. WCB

Answers to safety	1. c	4. true
meeting quiz:	2. a	5. false
	3. c	6. true

S a f e t y M a k i n g H e a d l i n e s

DVT's can make you a sitting duck

Sitting for long periods of time at a desk, or a job that requires you to drive or ride in a vehicle for hours on end, may put you at risk for a potential serious medical problem known as Deep Vein Thrombosis.

DVTs form in veins embedded in the muscles, typically in the lower leg, when there is a decrease in circulation.

When we sit for long periods of time blood tends to pool in our lower legs and feet and circulation decreases. This can cause blood clots.

If a blood clot or pieces of it break away and travel to other parts of the body, such as the lungs, a pulmonary embolism could occur and this and may result in death.

■ RISK FACTORS

One of the greatest factors attributed getting a DVT is not getting enough

SYMPTOMS

1. Aching, tenderness and swelling of the area in concern.
2. There may be a throbbing, burning sensation.
3. Veins in the area may be hard, cordlike and sensitive.
4. Elevated heart rate
5. Fever

aerobic exercise. If, for example, you lead a sedentary lifestyle and your greatest exercise is trying to find the television remote after work, you could be at risk.

If your job requires you to sit for long periods at a desk or in a vehicle, you are in the high risk group for DVT incidents.

■ PREVENTION

Regular exercise increases the body's ability to dissolve clots and improve circulation. If you sit at a desk all day, try getting up every one to two hours and walking around. This can help get the blood flowing. Stop frequently while on road trips to walk around and do leg stretches. If you are unable to stand and stretch you may also stretch while sitting by extending toes upward then pointing toes downward and making circular motions with your foot.

■ IF YOU SUSPECT A DVT...

A DVT can cause permanent damage to the vein and may even be fatal. So take steps to stay safe. Include a walk in your daily routine. Have regular checkups with your doctor. If you suspect you have symptoms of a DVT it is vital you get medical attention.

Impaired workers are nothing to sneeze at

As we enter the cold and flu season, many employees will either be missing work or taking medication to try and struggle through their shift. Many over-the-counter cold and flu medications contain a warning not to drive or operate machinery while taking the medication. The problem is people either don't read the warnings or simply ignore them.

Higher Risk Than Narcotics

There is evidence these "first generation" antihistamines found in cold remedy medications not only cause drowsiness, but may cause delayed reaction times, difficulty focusing on tasks and decreased memory. Studies show these effects

can be present even though the person does not feel "drowsy".

More Impairing Than Alcohol

A study at the University of Iowa tested people in a driving simulator. They were given 60 mg. of diphenhydramine, which is a common ingredient in over-the-counter antihistamines.

On another day subjects were given enough alcohol to produce a blood alcohol content of .1. The legal limit is .08 in Canada.

The subjects were then tested in the driving simulator. What the researchers found was after the diphenhydramine the drivers were more impaired than after the alcohol. Their ability to steer and stay in the

proper lane was significantly worse even though they did not necessarily feel drowsy.

If you are going to take medication and go to work, it is important you read the label.

Always follow the recommended dosages. Taking more than is recommended will not help you feel better faster and may increase the risk of an incident.

Ask your pharmacist to recommend a medicine that will not produce undesirable side effects. Remember some cough medicines contain significant amounts of alcohol.

Ask your staff to let you know they are taking medication. You may be able to change their assignment to something less hazardous.

ON THE MARKET

Cling-ons . . .

Having trouble seeing small details? Industrial workers requiring magnification for protective eyewear have a simple low-cost solution: OPTX20/20 MAGNIFYING Lenses. How do they work?

Similar to stickers placed on your windshield, OPTX20/20's cling to your

glasses. They remain in position until you remove them. They are completely removable and reusable. They will fit any glasses and are easy to install. The OPTX20/20 can be positioned on top for overhead work and are available in six magnifications.

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Safety Applications

Keep your door open

BY BRYDEN WINSBY
FOR COMFORT ZONE

Part of every supervisor's job is making sure safety rules are followed—but this responsibility goes beyond just being an enforcer. There's more to it than penalizing people for bad behavior or failing to follow proper procedures. Safety leadership, from a supervisor's standpoint, can be demonstrated by example (it's hard to demand a proper attitude when your own is poor) and by a willingness to communicate.

If you say "My door is always open," you've got to mean it, so the workers in your charge feel comfortable to say what's on their mind and get some results. A healthy working relationship demands that supervisors be receptive to concerns raised about potential safety hazards. Those who encourage such responsibility are likely to create a supportive environment.

When management at all levels communicates a commitment to safety, employees tend to respond by taking a more active interest in the subject.

"Communication skills" don't come easily to everyone, however.

The need for such skills often appears on the list of qualifications for a particular job, but it's certainly possible to get hired without them. And even those who have such skills need to practice.

Here are some examples:

■ **Be a listener.** Don't dominate the conversation with your own thoughts when someone has taken the initiative to come and discuss theirs.

■ **Encourage suggestions.** Employees need to know that their ideas will be considered. This can go so far as to install a system in which those who spot a hazard can fill out a form to report it. Awards can be given out for the most useful suggestions.

CHECK YOURSELF:

Communication skills may not come easy but they are vital.

Remember:

- ◆ Be a listener
- ◆ Encourage suggestions
- ◆ Respond promptly
- ◆ Be visible and approachable
- ◆ Inspect informally
- ◆ Meet and train

■ **Respond promptly.** Quick, positive action will show employees that their concerns are not just being heard.

■ **Be visible and approachable.** Managers and frontline supervisors who regularly walk around the workplace, who know employees by name, and who express genuine interest in what those employees do every day are bound to inspire confidence and a willingness to identify problems.

■ **Inspect informally.** Held on a regular basis, such inspections are another way to show commitment and they can be an excellent means of identifying and correcting hazards on the spot.

■ **Meet and train.** Whether they are brief, focused safety meetings or formal training sessions, these also should be regular. Such gatherings should foster a useful and open exchange of information.

Obviously, it would be hard to do any of the above with credibility unless you "know your stuff." In fact, this should probably go somewhere near the top. It's essential you be very familiar with the safety rules and procedures for your area of responsibility. If contractors, consultants or other outsiders happen to be working in your area, ensure they follow the same rules and procedures.

S a f e t y A p p l i c a t i o n s

One size won't fit all

BY BRYDEN WINSBY
FOR COMFORT ZONE

By definition, a health and safety program is an action plan designed to prevent accidents and occupational diseases. Some form of H&S program is required by legislation in jurisdictions throughout North America. This legislation spells out the minimum requirements for your program – the challenge is to make that program much better than minimal.

Everyone has a role to play. For supervisors, the role is crucial, because they're often in the best position to keep lines of communication open between management and employees.

Workers who notice hazards or other safety problems, or who feel they need additional training, must notify their supervisor. In turn, supervisors and management at all levels must address these concerns and take corrective action when warranted.

Most successful H&S programs are rooted firmly in past experience as well as in current laws and standards. They should also be an integral part of your company's personnel policies. This means compliance is a condition of employment; failure to comply is sufficient grounds for disciplinary action or termination. Since there's tremendous variation in the size and complexity of workplaces and the hazards they present, an H&S program developed for one organization won't necessarily meet the needs of another. Many small and medium-sized enterprises lack the resources of larger organizations, so it's even more important that they involve all employees in health and safety activities. The more comprehensive the program is, the more employee involvement can be expected. If your supervisory position includes being the company's safety coordinator, then your responsibilities will broaden to include advising all employees on health and safety matters, as well as coordinating interdepartmental H&S activities. This includes training and attendance at health and safety meetings as a resource person.

Depending on the nature of your workplace, other functions can include collection and analysis of statistics, as well as research into special problems.

CHECK YOURSELF:

To make an H&S program work, apply the following principles:

- ◆ explain and enforce health and safety regulations that apply to your company operations within your area of responsibility
- ◆ ensure that safety devices and proper personal protective equipment are used by persons under your supervision
- ◆ ensure that only authorized, adequately trained workers operate tools

and equipment or use hazardous chemicals

- ◆ ensure that equipment and materials are properly handled, stored, and maintained.
- ◆ conduct frequent and regular inspections to ensure that no unsafe conditions exist in your area of responsibility
- ◆ conduct regular and frequent safety briefings with all workers under your supervision
- ◆ ensure that injuries are treated promptly and reported properly

Well, well, well...

When Era Aviation employee Wayne Halliday got a flier about an upcoming health fair at company headquarters, he saw himself in the list of symptoms for a thyroid problem.

He signed up to be tested, which led to a heart exam, which led to bypass surgery — all in the space of a week.

Halliday credits the health fair with saving his life. "Without a doubt, I'd be down," he said.

Even without such dramatic success stories, workplace programs to boost employee health have caught the attention of businesses in North America.

Skyrocketing health costs have squeezed businesses for years. Most recently, pension shortfalls of billions of dollars have been pegged in part to health costs.

Medical costs and absenteeism go down when workplace health programs are in place, medical journals note.

Components range from information on disease prevention and healthy recipes to stop-smoking help and exercise encouragement.

No surprise, then, that wellness programs are becoming the norm. More than 80 per cent of companies with more than 50 employees have added such programs, seeking to reduce health care costs, according to recent statistics.

Studies conducted south of the border indicate a savings range from \$2 to \$10 for each dollar invested in health and safety programs.

— Scripps Howard News Service

Legislation Update

Brochures in 20 languages available for Ontario workers

Ontario workers who don't count English as their mother tongue can now access information regarding their labour rights in 20 languages. Brochures highlighting key sections of the Employment Standards Act are going multilingual, announced Labour Minister Chris Bentley "The people in the province's diverse workforce want to understand their employment rights and obligations,"

Bentley said in a release.

"That is why we have created clear and concise brochures that explain key aspects of the Employment Standards Act in English, French, and 18 other languages."

The government has published the first four brochures in a series of multilingual publications.

Your Rights at Work provides general information about the Employment Standards Act; Protecting Employees is a guide to how employees are protected from reprisals; Claim Your Rights is a step-by-step guide to filing a claim; and the brochure entitled Leaves of Absence serves as an introduction to pregnancy, parental, emergency, and family medical leaves.

The brochures are available in English, French, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, Greek, Gujarati, Italian, Korean, Filipino, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Under one roof

Legislation introduced to establish department of public safety and emergency preparedness

OTTAWA — Legislation was introduced in the House of Commons in October to establish the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

"The most fundamental role of Government is the protection of its citizens. When the Prime Minister created the Department last year, the Government of Canada took a critical step towards strengthening the safety and security of Canadians, their communities and our country," said the Honourable Anne McLellan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada.

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEPC) combines the core activities of the previous Department of the Solicitor General, the Office of Critical Infrastructure and Emergency Preparedness, and the National Crime Prevention Centre. The new Department is part of the portfolio of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness that includes the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Correctional Service of Canada, the National Parole Board, the Canada Firearms Centre, the Canada Border Services Agency, and three review bodies.

With this Bill, the Government of Canada proposes to build the legislative foundation to establish the powers, duties and functions of the Minister of PSEPC relating to public safety and emergency preparedness. More specifically, the Bill provides for:

in the leadership role of the PSEPC Minister relating to public safety and emergency preparedness, while respecting the Prime Minister's prerogative in matters relating to national security and the statutory authorities of other Ministers;

- the Minister to establish strategic priorities for and coordination of the portfolio agencies, while respecting their distinct mandates as enshrined in their respective enabling legislations;
- cooperation with provinces, foreign states, international organizations and others on matters pertaining to public safety and emergency preparedness; and
- facilitating the sharing of information among public safety agencies as is authorized under current Canadian law.

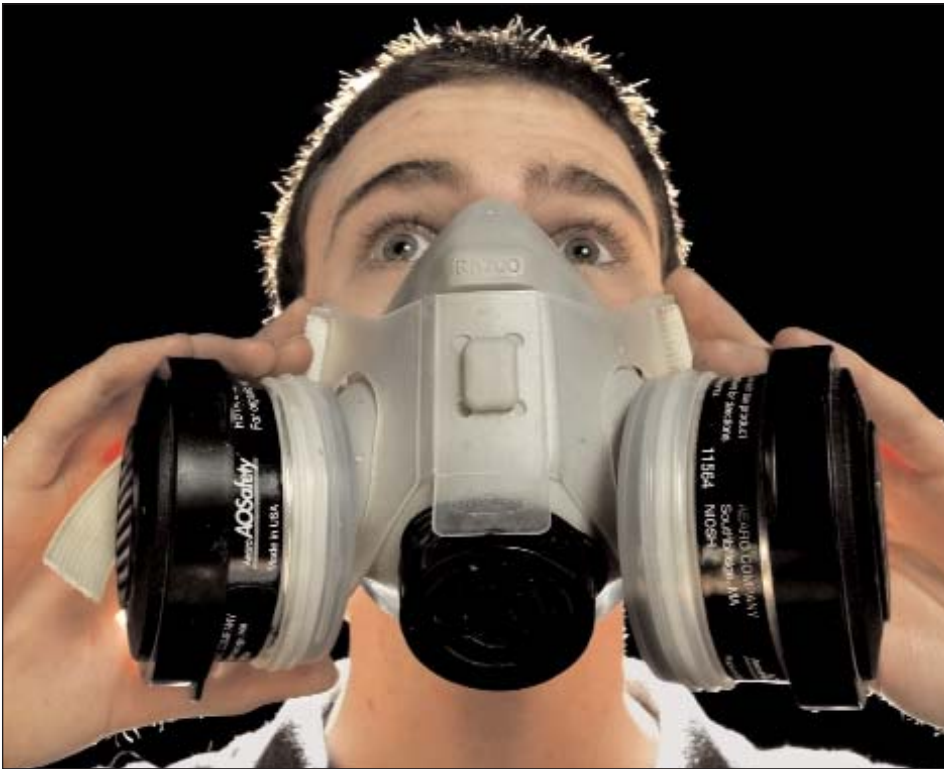
An on-line version of the proposed legislation is available at www.parl.gc.ca.

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B i t s a n d P i e c e s



Timeline fitness

It's important to adapt exercising for each decade of your life: The key is focusing on muscle strength, tone and endurance, say health and fitness experts.

There are three goals in fitness: strength, tone and endurance. Each decade of life offers windows of opportunities for these different areas. The three variables of weightlifting are weight, number of repetitions and speed of repetition. The length of rest between sets of repetitions will also affect the difficulty.

To increase tone in your 30s and 40s, use lighter weights and higher repetitions (10 pounds, eight to 12 reps). For endurance, flexibility and range of motion in your 50s and beyond, use very light weights and a high number of repetitions at a faster pace (8 pounds, 15 to 30 reps).

Roadtrip stretches will keep you alert

It's important to stretch periodically (every few hours) during a road trip. It re-energizes you by increasing the blood circulation to the working muscles. It prevents stiffness and helps keep you alert. Fitness expert Nancy Ottman points out several simple stretches that can be done both inside and outside your car.

- ◆ Sit on the edge of your car and extend each leg out and in for between eight and 12 repetitions. This can be especially beneficial for seniors.
- ◆ Push against the car to stretch your calf muscle. Stretch each leg.
- ◆ Shoulder stretches can be done inside the car. Just cross one arm over onto your shoulder and support your elbow with the other arm. Hold for 10 to 30 seconds on each arm.

Clear the air

Air quality is a big concern, but many people often forget to regularly do one thing that will help them breathe easier in their homes.

Changing air filters, also called furnace filters, can make a difference in the air quality.

Air filters are needed to keep the components in a home's heating and cooling system clean.

But filters also clean and clear the air by trapping dust, dirt, animal dander and other particles.

Most filters for homes are one inch thick.

Inexpensive filters are made of fiberglass or polyester and should be changed monthly.

These filters can be found at home-improvement, hardware and department stores.

Washable or reusable filters usually have an initial high cost but can be used for years before they need to be replaced.

They should be washed monthly. Other filters, made with cotton or polyester material, are pleated or flat and should be changed every two to three months.

There also are electrostatic filters in which the fibres are electrostatically charged, drawing smaller particles to the filter.

These filters should be changed every two to three months.

When buying replacement filters, check the Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating number, which measures the filter's ability to trap particles ranging in size from three to 10 microns.

The ratings, which are an industry standard, range from one to 16, with the higher the number, the better the efficiency.

One way to remember to change your filters is to do it when you have to pay your utility bill.

- *Scripps Howard News Service*

BACKFIRE

Four out of five adults have suffered from back pain at some time in their lives. Many live with it every day.

It's one of the top five reasons people go to the doctor or stay home from work. It costs the economy billions.

Research shows that 40 is the peak age for back injury, and back problems are the biggest cause of disability for people under 45.

One of the biggest causes of chronic back pain is lack of strength in the back and abdominal muscles that encircle the body like a corset and support the trunk and spine.

Time spent building those muscles is an investment in your future health.

Here is one exercise you can do to stretch and strengthen the all-important core muscles to help stop back problems:



AB MARCH

How to: Lie on your back, knees bent, feet on the floor. Slowly lift your right leg toward your chest, then your left. Now return your right foot to the floor, then the left. Keep the small of your back on the floor. Do 10 reps.

Variation: To make it easier, lift and return one leg at a time.

— Scripps Howard News Service

Get your car ready for winter

- ◆ Check windshield wiper blades to make sure they work properly. In some areas, snow blades are an effective alternative to conventional wiper blades.
- ◆ Check your anti-freeze/coolant to provide the correct level of protection required in your driving area.
- ◆ Make sure your tires are properly inflated. Letting air out to drive in snow can reduce the gripping action of tires because the tread will not meet the road surface as it was designed to do. Over-inflation has the same effect.
- ◆ Use dedicated snow and ice tires if you live in areas where snow and ice are certainties. Snow and ice tires have a softer tread compound and a unique tread design to provide enhanced traction and road-gripping capabilities. Install snow tires all the way around the vehicle, not just on the drive axle.
- ◆ Keep your gas tank at least half-full. The extra volume can help reduce moisture problems within your fuel system. It also adds a margin of safety should you become stopped or stranded during your trip.
- ◆ **Battery:** Make sure terminals are clean and tightened. You can clean yourself with an old toothbrush and a homemade mixture of baking soda and water. Batteries should be replaced every 3-4 years

Calcium can help shed pounds

Most people know they should be getting enough calcium for strong teeth and bones, but did you know that new research shows this mineral could also help you lose weight? Dairy sources seem to have the greatest effect on weight loss, so make sure to eat three daily servings of low-fat dairy products, like yogurt, skim milk, and cheese.

An apple a day could keep cancer away

Add colon cancer prevention to the possible list of reasons that an apple a day keeps the doctor away. Studies in lab rats show that certain antioxidants found in apples sharply reduce pre-cancerous lesions in their colons, according to researchers at a cancer prevention meeting held recently.

The team of French scientists also found that the apple compounds influence cancer by altering specific cell-signaling pathways that lead to cell death.

“These studies not only offer insights into the chemopreventive properties of these compounds (called polyphenols), they also offer proof of their potential to prevent colon cancer,” said Francis Raul, the study’s lead investigator and research director of the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research.

Here are a few tips for fitness beginners

- Pick the time for exercise that best fits into your daily schedule, whether it's before work or before bedtime. Don't feel locked into a time, though, and be prepared to adjust it to fit whatever comes up daily. It's more important to exercise than to do it at the scheduled time.
- Start with 20 to 45 minutes a day, two or

three days a week.

- Think of exercise as fun and try not to refer to it as a workout. By keeping a positive attitude and thinking of it as fun, regular exercise will more easily become a part of a daily routine.

- Before beginning any exercise program make sure to discuss it with your doctor.

Read this part of the meeting aloud

Nocturnal working hours

Today's meeting will go over ways to cope with working odd and night shifts.

There's no doubt about it. Working odd shifts can take their toll on you. Some people thrive on working different shifts. They like the idea of being up and working when the rest of the world is asleep, or perhaps they enjoy having the morning off to get all sorts of little errands done. But, whether you like them or hate them, your body is going to react to them.

Call us creatures of habit, but our bodies enjoy being up during the day, and sleeping at night. They expect to be active when the sun is up and shut down when the stars come out. As a result your body starts to react to the changes and often these reactions are not pleasant. According to numerous studies dedicated to this topic, shiftworkers may experience:

- respiratory and motor organ disorders
- shortage of quality sleep
- increased fatigued levels
- and lapses in performance.

Working during the hours of midnight to five a.m. disrupts your normal wake and sleep cycle and this can cause you to wake during your next sleep and then want to fall asleep during the next shift.

Your built-in rhythms have been disturbed, and it can take several days for the body to readjust. Broken sleep stops the shift worker getting quality sleep.

Shift workers have also reported a lack of energy for doing all normal activities they used to do before working night shifts. These included activities like; gardening, home maintenance and recreational sports.

Those of us working nights or odd shifts have likely experienced many of these problems, but lets face it, shift work can't be eliminated. So instead of giving up

to these problems, we need to look at ways to help our bodies adjust to these strange sleeping and waking hours. Someone who is irritable and sleepy or not feeling well can make errors while on the job - perhaps even fatal mistakes. None of us want that to happen.

While your handout will have other useful tips when pulling odd shifts, let's discuss these strategies for minimizing shiftworker sleep deficit:

■ **Maintain a proper diet and regular eating habits.**

Food consumed at night should be light and healthy. Before bed after a night shift, have a moderate breakfast. Limit the intake of caffeine, alcohol and salt. Avoid use of sleeping pills as much as possible,

■ **Relax before going to bed.** Give yourself some quiet time and use breathing or muscle-relaxing techniques.

■ **Make sleeping easier.** Try to sleep on a set schedule in an environment that's as much like night as possible. This can mean darkening the room with heavy blinds or curtains, and even using earplugs and an eye mask. Turn off telephone ringers on nearby phones and use an answering machine.

■ **Have a little understanding:** Is your partner the one working odd shifts? With irritability one of the leading characteristics of shift workers, an understanding partner and family does help. Many people just react without thinking and this can inflame an already difficult situation. Some consultants offer training for family and partners on how to handle "stressed out" shift workers.

Thanks for your attention today.

Distribute to meeting attendees

Keep this handout for handy reference.

Nocturnal working hours

Here are some simple suggestions to cope with shiftwork. If continually practised you may be able to handle working odd shifts a little better:

☞ **Ensure you get some peace and quiet** — no noisy children, lawn mowers or air conditioners. However, white noise like a small fan may help block out every day sounds. Remember to unplug the phone as well. Consider getting an answering machine.

☞ **Darkness** - Consider using special light proof curtains, or ensure there are some coverings on your bedroom windows.

☞ **Temperature control** - make sure the room is neither too hot or too cold and keep humidity under control so that it is comfortable for sleeping

☞ **A comfortable bed** - this is really important for overall health. And sleep in bed. Do not use the couch as your place to get solid sleep.

☞ **Sleeping aids** - Consider using blindfolds and ear plugs.

☞ **A visit to the washroom** - Going to bed with an empty bladder will ensure you don't wake up in a couple of hours.

Extra Exercise

Studies have shown extra exercise does help. We understand it is hard to get excited about doing more exercise when you feel so tired from working shifts but consider adding a 15 to 20 minute walk to your routine.

Drinking fluids

Due to the slowing down of the body functions at night coupled with the usually lower temperatures, shiftworkers may not drink as much as they should. This can cause mild dehydration. Therefore an adequate intake of fluids during night can stop dehydration. Trial and error is the best method to find the right balance required.

Attendance sheet

Nocturnal working hours

Meeting date: _____

Meeting leader: _____

Meeting Quiz:

1. Shiftwork can cause the following:

- a. Respiratory disorders
- b. improper sleep
- c. all of the above

2. What is the most disruptive thing that happens to your body when working shifts?

- a. your built-in rhythms are disrupted
- b. the only shows you can watch are daytime talk shows
- c. you miss out on many family activities

3. What can happen if you are not properly rested?

- a. You become irritable
- b. You are susceptible to making errors
- c. all of the above

4. Blocking out every day noises by using "white noise" will help you sleep better during the day.

- True
- False

5. Falling asleep on the couch for a quick nap will provide you with enough sleep.

- True
- False

6. Shiftworkers can become easily dehydrated.

- True
- False
