

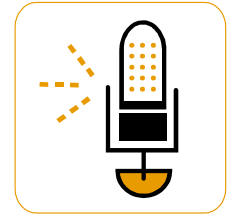
RMU Safety Update

Published by the Robert Morris University Safety Department, (412) 262-8328

December 2005

Inside This Issue:

Fire Safety Measures	2
Association of 2 Independent Colleges and Universities	
Asbestos Building 3 Inspections	
Contractor/ 3 Construction Safety	
Arranging a 3 Computer Workstation: Three Steps for Users	
Safety Tips: 4 Surviving the Cold Weather	



RMU Safety Committee

RMU has recently established a University Safety Committee, responsible for the development and administration of a comprehensive safety process for the University. The committee is co-chaired by William J. Katip, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Academic & Student Affairs and Mr. Dan W. Kiener, Senior Vice President for Business Affairs. Additionally, Robert Morris hired Timothy J. Kirsch, Safety Officer to provide direction, oversight and technical guidance related to the safety process.

The University Safety Committee has approximately 18 members, who provide representation from a cross section of organizational disciplines and the University campuses. The committee has

established "By-Laws" which identify the purpose, mission and goals RMU will continue to operate. The safety process is intended to provide a safe physical environment free of recognized hazards, manage activities to reduce the risk of injuries and preserve the safety of all persons at the University.

The scope of the safety process has been designed to include all faculty, staff, students and other visitors to the University. Additionally, there are several safety aspects or functional areas included in the scope of the overall safety process. These functional areas are being administered by seven (7) subcommittees as follows:

Safety Management – chaired by Jill Whitmer

Security Management – chaired by Randy Mink

Hazardous Materials & Waste – chaired by Tim Kirsch

Lab Safety Management – chaired by Paul Badger

Fire Safety Management – chaired by Melinda Martin

Emergency Management - chaired by Mike Rick

Utility Systems Management – chaired by Perry Roofner

Each of these subcommittees are finalizing detailed Management Plans, which summarize the goals, responsibilities and specific implementation policies and procedures to be established to achieve RMU's overall mission and goals for a safe environment.





RMU has implemented fire safety inspection and testing criteria which is consistent with National Fire Protection Association Codes.

The National Safety Council has a great Fact Sheet for Fire Safety in the Home . . . for more information visit: <http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/fires.htm>

Fire Safety Measures on Campus

A key component of our fire safety plan is to ensure that the physical systems function properly. These physical systems may include the building fire alarm system, fire suppression system, fire extinguishers and emergency exit lighting and signage. RMU has implemented inspection and testing criteria which is consistent with National Fire Protection Association codes. This means these systems are inspected/tested at recommended intervals,

detailed reports are generated and reviewed, and appropriate action is taken when deficiencies are identified.

Fire safety systems have a designated purpose and function and should only be used for that purpose. Please help maintain a safe environment at RMU.

Remember, all occupants must evacuate the building in the event of a fire alarm. Even if you

suspect the incident to be a "false alarm" you need to evacuate the building. RMU has been monitoring fire alarm activity and is investigating the issue of false alarms. Tampering with the facilities fire safety equipment by damaging or altering the equipment or falsely activating the alarm is a serious offence. If you have any information related to such tampering, please contact RMU's Public Safety Department at (412) 299-2424.

The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP)

RMU has recently joined AICUP's "Environmental Self-Audit Program". As the US Environmental Protection Agency began conducting audits of colleges and universities, it was recognized that there were opportunities for these institutions to improve practices related to environmental compliance. This

program provides a proactive approach and encourages voluntary compliance. By joining the program, RMU has committed to having a comprehensive environmental audit of our campuses. The audit will be completed, under the direction of third-party consultant, by a team of peers from other AICUP member

institutions. RMU is also committed to taking appropriate action on noted deficiencies. RMU's Safety Officer will participate as an auditor of other institutions. We anticipate that RMU will be audited in the Spring of 2007.

For more information about AICUP, visit their website at <http://www.aicup.org/>

Asbestos Building Inspections

For many years, asbestos was used in common building materials. Many facilities on RMU campuses were constructed during the time asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) were used. To verify which facilities contain ACBM, a detailed inspection was conducted in suspect facilities to identify, quantify and locate these materials. If maintained in good condition and not disturbed, ACBMs do not pose a risk to building occupants. Remember – only properly trained and licensed personnel are permitted to work with asbestos containing materials. Please contact Tim Kirsch, Safety Officer at (412) 262-8328 if you have any questions.

Contractor/ Construction Safety



The signs of construction are obvious and part of the growth at RMU. There are many potential hazards inherent to this type of work, not only to the personnel completing the work, but to the surrounding environment. Subsequently, the Facilities and Construction department has implemented expectations for these contractors. A Contractor Safety Handbook states that contractors must comply with OSHA, Environmental and similar requirements, as well as, RMU requirements.

Arranging a Computer Workstation: Three Steps for Users

Creating a good ergonomic working arrangement is important to protecting your health. The following steps are designed to help you with the proper set up of your workstation.



Step 1: Your Chair:

- Adjust the seat height so that your feet are flat on the floor or on a footrest. Your thighs should be parallel to the floor;
- Adjust your chair seat depth, either by moving the backrest or repositioning the seat pan of the chair, so that you have three – to four fingers-width clearance between the edge of your chair and the back of your knees;
- If the backrest goes up and down, position it so that the extra curve in the chair fits the curve in your lower back; and
- Adjust the armrests so that they just brush the underside of your arm. If they are in the way, remove them or drop them out of the way.

Step 2: Your Keyboard and Mouse or other Pointing Device:

- Pull up close to your keyboard so that your hands reach it comfortably. Your keyboard should be centered in front of you;
- Adjust the height of your key-board so that it is slightly below your seated elbow height;
- Adjust the angle of the keyboard tray to achieve a straight wrist position; and
- Position your pointing device next to and on the same level as your keyboard.
- If you do not have an adjustable keyboard tray, you could adjust your workstation height or the height of your chair and use a footrest to get the proper position.

Step 3: Your Monitor Work or Materials and Telephone:

- Center the monitor directly in front of you at a comfortable viewing distance;
- Position the top of the monitor screen at or below eye level. If you wear bifocal lenses, lower the monitor to a comfortable reading level;
- Position the monitor screen at right angles to room windows to minimize glare;
- When using source documents, use a copyholder placed between the monitor and the keyboard, or next to and at the same height as your monitor; and
- Place frequently used items such as your phone, reference books and documents within arm's reach.

If you can't seem to get your arrangement to feel right or you are not clear about some of the recommendations seek assistance from your supervisor and/or Safety Services.

Safety Tips: Surviving the Cold Weather

Prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind and/or moisture can result in cold-related injury from frostbite and hypothermia. Here are some suggestions on how to keep warm and avoid frostbite and hypothermia.

Dress properly

Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothing to insulate your body by trapping warm, dry air inside. Loosely woven cotton and wool clothes best trap air and resist dampness.

The head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body. Your cheeks, ears and nose are the most prone to frostbite. Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck sweater to protect these areas.

Frostbite: What to look for

The extent of frostbite is difficult to judge until hours after thawing. There are two classifications of frostbite:

Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas. The skin feels cold and numb. The skin surface feels stiff and underlying tissue feels soft when depressed.

Deep frostbite is characterized by waxy and pale skin. The affected parts feel cold, hard, and solid and cannot be depressed. Large blisters may appear after rewarming.

What to do

Get the victim out of the cold and to a warm place immediately.

Remove any constrictive clothing items that could impair circulation.

If you notice signs of frostbite, seek medical attention immediately.

Place dry, sterile gauze between toes and fingers to absorb moisture and to keep

them from sticking together. Slightly elevate the affected part to reduce pain and swelling.

If you are more than one hour from a medical facility and you have warm water, place the frostbitten part in the water (102 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit). If you do not have a thermometer, test the water first to see if it is warm, not hot. Rewarming usually takes 20 to 40 minutes or until tissues soften.

What not to do

Do not use water hotter than 106 degrees Fahrenheit. Do not use water colder than 100 degrees Fahrenheit since it will not thaw frostbite quickly enough. Do not rub or massage the frostbite area. Do not rub with ice or snow.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the body loses more heat than it produces. Symptoms include change in mental status, uncontrollable shivering, cool abdomen and a low core body temperature. Severe hypothermia may cause rigid muscles, dark and puffy skin, irregular heartbeat and respiration, and unconsciousness.

Treat hypothermia by protecting the victim from further heat loss and seeking immediate medical attention. Get the victim out of the cold. Add insulation such as blankets, pillows, towels or newspapers beneath and around the victim. Be sure to cover the victim's head. Replace wet clothing with dry clothing. Handle the victim gently because rough handling can cause cardiac arrest. Keep the victim in a horizontal (flat) position.

Finally, the best way to avoid frostbite and hypothermia is to stay out of the cold. Read a book, clean house or watch TV. Be patient and wait out the dangerous cold weather.



"The head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck to protect these areas."