

# NABLC Safety Advisor

January 2004



WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reminds consumers to follow safety precautions when purchasing and using electric or fuel-fired space heaters. In a recent year, there were about 10,900 residential fires and about 190 deaths associated with portable or fixed local heaters.

Fuel-burning space heaters also can cause carbon monoxide poisoning and indoor air pollution because of improper venting or incomplete combustion.

"CPSC has worked with industry to improve safety standards for space heaters," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton, "but consumers must exercise care in how they use space heaters."

- Choose a space heater that has been tested to the latest safety standards and certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. These heaters will have the most up-to-date safety features, while older space heaters may not meet the newer safety standards. CPSC worked to upgrade industry standards for electric, kerosene, and vented and unvented gas space heaters. An automatic cut-off device is now required to turn off electric or kerosene heaters if they tip over. More guarding around the heating coils of electric heaters and the burner of kerosene heaters also is required to prevent fires. CPSC worked to upgrade the industry standard for unvented gas heaters to provide an oxygen depletion sensor to shut off the heater if the oxygen level drops too low. CPSC and industry amended the vented heater standard to provide a spill switch to turn off the heater if the vent is blocked or disconnected.

- Select a space heater with a guard around the flame area or heating element. Place the heater on a level, hard and nonflammable surface, not on rugs or carpets or near bedding or drapes. Keep the heater at least three feet from bedding, drapes, furniture, or other flammable materials.

- Keep doors open to the rest of the house if you are using an unvented fuel-burning space heater. This helps prevent pollutant build-up and promotes proper combustion. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to provide sufficient combustion air to prevent CO production.

- Never leave a space heater on when you go to sleep. Never place a space heater close to any sleeping person.

- Turn the space heater off if you leave the area. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.

- Have a smoke alarm with fresh batteries on each level of the house and inside every bedroom. In addition, have a carbon monoxide alarm outside the bedrooms in each separate sleeping area.

- Be aware that mobile homes require specially designed heating equipment.

- Have gas and kerosene space heaters inspected annually.

Consumers who would like more information can view the booklet, "What You Should Know about Space Heaters," on the CPSC web site (<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/463.html>), or receive a free copy by sending a postcard to "Space Heater Booklet," CPSC, Washington, DC 20207.

## ORM Refresher

### What is ORM?

ORM (Operational Risk Management) is a decision making tool- used by people at all levels to increase operational effectiveness by anticipating hazards and reducing the potential for loss, thereby increasing the probability of a successful mission. ORM is an effective tool for maintaining readiness in peacetime and success in combat because it helps conserve assets so they can be applied at the decisive time and place. ORM is not just a work center or shop function. Petty Officers and individual Sailors make risk

decisions everyday, and need to know how to manage risks. Force reductions make every Sailor and piece of equipment more critical to mission success. ORM process is proven to be mission supportive. We have a moral responsibility to protect our Sailors.

#### **How ORM Works**

ORM is a closed loop process of identifying and controlling hazards. It follows a 5-step sequence, is applied on one of three levels depending on the situation, and is guided by 4 principles.

#### **Purpose of ORM**

The purpose of ORM is to minimize risks to acceptable levels, proportional to mission accomplishment.

#### **Goal Of ORM**

The goal of ORM is to manage risk so the mission can be accomplished with the minimum amount of loss.

#### **Benefits Of ORM**

Applying the ORM process will reduce mishaps, lower injury and property damage costs, provide for more effective use of resources, improve training realism, effectiveness and improve readiness.

#### **Origin Of ORM**

The ORM concept grew out of ideas originally developed to improve safety in the development of new weapons, aircraft and space vehicles, and nuclear power. The US Army adopted Risk Management in 1991 to reduce training and combat losses.

#### **Why ORM?**

Because!

Unnecessary losses are detrimental to operational capability! Unnecessary mishaps cause unnecessary losses every day in the Navy and Marine Corps. ORM will help reduce those losses.

### **HEARING CONSERVATION**

The hearing conservation standard requires employers to monitor noise exposure levels in a manner that will accurately identify employees who are exposed to Work environments found to have noise levels greater than 84 dB(A) (continuous or intermittent), or 140 dB peak sound pressure level for impact or impulse noise, shall be analyzed to determine the potential hazard. Monitoring should be repeated when changes in production, process, or controls increase noise exposure. Such changes may mean that additional employees need to be monitored and/or their hearing protectors may no longer provide adequate attenuation. Supervisors should be familiar with hazardous noise operations identified in their Industrial Hygiene Survey and Activity Executive Summary and take necessary steps to mitigate those hazards.



### **SafeTips of the Week from the Naval Safety Center**

Colds - 10 Ways to Stop Spreading Them

1. Wash your hands a lot.
2. Don't share cups.
3. Use tissues when you blow your nose, then throw them away.
4. Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth.
5. Use disposable paper towels in the kitchen, not cloth ones.
6. Wash your children's toys once a week.
7. Cover your mouth with a tissue or your hands when you sneeze.
8. Open your windows when the weather is decent. Consider buying a humidifier.
9. Frequently clean doorknobs, light switches, telephones and counter tops.
10. Don't let anyone smoke in your house.

For a printable version of these tips, go to: <http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/safetips/colds-p.htm>

# SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS

Most of us assume that anyone who falls at work must be a total klutz. Exactly how often do falls lead to workplace injuries? Consider the following:



The National Safety Council attributed 12,400 deaths - an average of 238 per week - to falls in the United States during one recent year. Workplace falls take over 700 lives and result in over 300,000 injuries involving time away from work. Healthcare costs due to falls, total over \$37 billion a year in the United States, second only to motor-vehicle injuries, which cost \$49 billion. Either there are a lot of klutzes out there, or this is a real problem.

On stairways alone, falls result in almost two million disabling injuries yearly. There are thousands more minor injuries caused by slips, trips, and falls each year. Slips occur when there is too little friction between a person's feet and the walking surface. Many factors can cause a slip. Ice, oil, water, cleaning fluids, and other slippery substances are probably the most obvious causes. The flooring may be inappropriate - perhaps it is a slick material - or the person who slips may not be wearing proper shoes. Always promptly clean up spills of slippery substances. Better yet, prevent the spills in the first place. What do experts recommend as the single most important step you can take in preventing slips and falls? Simple - keep floors clean. Make a mental note to always look around and be aware of any objects or wet areas or other spills on the floor. Avoid walking in areas, which pose slipping hazards if at all possible. Then take the time to do something about it. This may seem like an added hassle to your already busy workload, but in the end you may prevent someone in your staff, yourself included, from suffering a workplace injury. Always ensure that stairways are well lit, handrails are sturdy and steps are clear and free of debris. Be sure to keep one hand free to hold onto handrails.



Winter is here. If sidewalks or walkways become icy, keep sand or rock salt on hand to spread where people walk. Keep snow from accumulating and turning sidewalks into an ice rink.

Slips, trips, and falls cause numerous injuries every day. But they are among the easiest hazards to correct. Take the time to look around your worksite for these hazards and work to prevent them. Take care not to cause any slip, trip, or fall hazards as you go about your daily activities. Don't let a slip, trip, or fall keep you from enjoying all that life has to offer.

## OSHA Offers Tips To Protect Workers In Cold Environments



WASHINGTON -- With the onset of cold weather, OSHA is reminding employers and workers to take necessary precautions to prevent and treat cold-related health problems. Prolonged exposure to freezing or cold temperatures may cause serious health problems such as trench foot, frostbite and hypothermia. In extreme cases, including cold water immersion, exposure can lead to death. Danger signs include uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, clumsy movements, fatigue and confused behavior. If these signs are observed, call for emergency help.

Tips include:

- \* Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that may be dangerous.
- \* Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses and injuries and what to do to help workers.
- \* Train workers about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- \* Encourage workers to wear proper clothing for cold, wet and windy conditions, including layers that can be adjusted to changing conditions.
- \* Be sure workers in extreme conditions take a frequent short break in warm dry shelters to allow their bodies to warm up.
- \* Try to schedule work for the warmest part of the day.
- \* Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- \* Use the buddy system - work in pairs so that one worker can recognize danger signs.
- \* Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks) and avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, sodas or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- \* Eat warm, high-calorie foods such as hot pasta dishes.
- \* Remember, workers face increased risks when they take certain medications, are in poor physical condition or suffer from illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension or cardiovascular disease.