

Safety Spotlight:

[National School Bus Safety Week](https://www.napt.org/nsbsw)

Five Minutes for Safety:

October 5-11 is [Fire Prevention Week](https://www.nfpa.org/events/fire-prevention-week). This year’s important campaign is, “Charge into Fire Safety: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home,” works to educate everyone about using these batteries safely. The campaign stresses how important it is to buy, charge, and recycle safely when it comes to lithium-ion batteries.

Halloween Safety Tips

Check out some [tips](https://www.nsc.org/community-safety/safety-topics/seasonal-safety/autumn-safety/halloween?src=fbc-AshtonOctober+28) from the National Safety Council on costume safety and avoiding automobiles while being outside.

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*Avoid (musculo)skeletal disorders this spooky season*

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Started in 2003 by the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, [National Ergonomics Month](https://www.hfes.org/Events/National-Ergonomics-Month) (NEM) promotes the science, application, and profession of ergonomics through education, service, and networking throughout the month of October.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines ergonomics as fitting the work to the worker. An effective ergonomics program can help reduce or even eliminate musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), which lead to annual costs in the range of $13 billion to $54 billion. MSDs affect muscles, joints, and nerves, leading to injuries like tendinitis and carpal tunnel syndrome.

NIOSH celebrates NEM to raise awareness about and prevent common workplace MSDs. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, from 2021 to 2022, more than 500,000 MSDs resulted in at least one day away from work. The goal of NEM is to reduce that number by addressing key MSD risk factors, such as:

* Awkward postures
* Contact stress
* Repetitive motions
* Forceful movements
* Vibration

NIOSH offers a [visual hierarchy](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hierarchy-of-controls/about/index.html) to help employers control MSD risk factors and develop their own ergonomics program.

1. **Elimination:** Remove the hazard. This is the most effective way to control exposure to a hazard.
2. **Substitution:** Replace the hazard.
3. **Engineering controls:** Isolate people from the hazard.
4. **Administrative controls:** Change the way people work.
5. **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** Protect workers with PPE. This is the least effective means of control.

This October and beyond, create or assess your own ergonomics program to ensure worker safety and prevent MSDs. <https://www.osha.gov/ergonomics>



*IMPORTANT NOTICE - The information presented in this newsletter is intended for internal State of Wisconsin agency consideration in loss prevention efforts. Due to space limitations, may not always be all-inclusive in identifying all material associated with topics discussed. It is encouraged to adjust the contents to fit the specific audience of your operation.*

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A safer mopping experience

[Workers in the cleaning industry are at higher risk for musculoskeletal disorders](https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/27204-a-safer-mopping-experience#:~:text=Position%20the%20mop%20head%20to,and%20falls%20on%20wet%20surfaces.). MSDs include sprains; strains; and overuse injuries to the back, neck, shoulders and upper limbs.

To help reduce the risk of MSDs, janitorial workers and cleaners can follow these safe mopping tips from the [Washington State Department of Labor and Industries](https://lni.wa.gov/):

* Hold the mop handle almost straight up and down and close to the body. This positioning will help keep the back straight.
* Position the mop head to be 12 to 18 inches in front of feet.
* Adjust the mop handle to be slightly below the chin when standing up.
* Use a figure-eight motion when mopping to cover a large area.
* Start mopping at the furthest wall and work towards the exit to prevent slips, trips and falls on wet surfaces.
* Use floor drains to empty mop bucket water instead of lifting the bucket to a sink.
* Keep the back upright as possible.
* Rotate between tasks and take breaks.

For cleaning industry employers, the Washington State department recommends providing training and frequent reminders on best practices for safe cleaning, safe handling, and storage of chemical solutions. Workers should also be provided personal protective equipment to protect against chemical hazards.

Did you hear? It’s National Protect Your Hearing Month

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 22 million employees each year are exposed to workplace noise that could potentially damage their hearing. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) works to prevent work-related hearing loss through its National Protect Your Hearing Month (NPYHM) campaign. Every October, NIOSH reminds employers and workers to take proactive measures to conserve hearing health.

Though some jobsites, like airport tarmacs and construction projects, increase the risk of occupational hearing loss, everyone should be aware of the potential dangers. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) lists three key signs that may indicate noise is a problem in the workplace:

1. Hear ringing or humming in ears even after leaving work.
2. Experiencing temporary hearing loss after the workday is finished.
3. The need to shout to hear one another at arm’s length.

This NPYHM, review the OSHA standards for [occupational noise exposure](https://www.osha.gov/noise) and assess the controls put into place to prevent hearing loss in the workplace and at home. Consider conducting regular noise monitoring; using personal protective equipment, such as earplugs, correctly and consistently; replacing noisy equipment with quieter models or using sound-dampening materials; and offering or attending training for all employees about the importance of hearing conservation programs.

<https://www.osha.gov/noise>

Consumer Safety

[United States Consumer Product Safety Commission](http://www.cpsc.gov/)

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