

A BRIEF LOOK AT -

OFFICE EQUIPMENT SAFETY



In addition to Agency's other policies, procedures, and trainings, as well as the information in other "A Brief Look" lessons, office equipment safety is essential for you to take into consideration.

As part of the orientation, staff should be educated on the safe and appropriate use of equipment owned by the Agency and/or used in the office. Any identified equipment hazards or defects should be reported to the appropriate person immediately. Equipment repairs or replacements should then take place.

All equipment should be used following the manufacturer's guidelines and used only as intended.

Electric Equipment Safety

Since almost all of the equipment used in the office is electric, let's look at some general electric equipment safety tips. These include, but are not limited to:



Do not put cords under rugs where they can be walked on and damage go unnoticed.



Repair or replace broken, frayed, damaged, or melted cords promptly.



If extension cords must be used for office equipment requiring grounding, use one with a three-pronged plug.



Insert and remove plugs by grasping the plug, not by pulling on the cord.



Do not overload an outlet with the plugs from too much office equipment.



Use office equipment with the Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) symbol. This shows the equipment has been safety-tested.

Now, let's look at a couple pieces of office equipment specifically and review safety tips on using each one.

Shredders

Although this sounds simple, the key safety tip for using a shredder is to keep fingers, clothing, and hair away from the opening.



Telephones



- ▶ Never use a telephone near water.
- ▶ Avoid using the telephone during a storm as there may be a risk of electrical shock from lightning.
- ▶ Do not use the telephone to report a gas leak if you are near the source of the leak.
- ▶ Use a damp cloth for cleaning and unplug the telephone from the wall outlet before cleaning.
- ▶ Place the phone on a stable surface.
- ▶ Do not block slots or vents.



A special note about cell phones:

Follow your Agency's policy on the use of cell phones. In general, the use of cell phones in the office is discouraged. When driving, pull off the road to make the call or use a hands-free system. Keep the call short so you can pay attention to your driving.

Office Machines and Equipment

There are many other office machines and various pieces of equipment in your office including computers, copiers, fax machines typewriters, etc. As stated above, always follow the instructions in the user's manual that came with the office machine and equipment. Because this information is so varied, we will look at some general tips for you to follow for the use of any office machine or piece of equipment.



Secure machines that tend to move during operation so they don't fall off the work surface.



Do not place machines near the edge of a table or desk.



Do not remove any safety guards on machines with moving parts.



Do not use any machine that smokes, sparks, shocks, or appears defective in any way. Unplug the machine.



If you do open a copier, be very careful because some of the surfaces may be hot.



Close hand-operated paper cutters after using and secure the guard.

Work station arrangement is another important safety consideration.

- + Keep all supplies within easy reach.
- + Have adequate lighting.
- + Keep walkways clear.
- + Use proper body mechanics and good posture.
- + Use adaptive equipment such as document holders and wrist supports, if needed.



In conclusion, **YOU** are responsible for keeping the office safe and for using office machines and equipment safely.

Be sure you are rested and alert at all times.

Always use common sense where safety is concerned!

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QUIZ

1. To unplug a piece of equipment, I should pull the cord out of the wall socket.
 True
 False

2. I should not use a telephone during a storm.
 True
 False

3. I should follow the manufacturer's instructions when using office machines and equipment.
 True
 False

4. I should be rested and use common sense when working with office machines and equipment.
 True
 False

Signature

Date



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ANSWER KEY

1. FALSE
2. TRUE
3. TRUE
4. TRUE