



THE EHS CONNECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER-JUNE 2016

REASONS TO WEAR A SEAT BELT

As you know, driver safety is very important. When you're behind the wheel, your actions will affect you, others in the car, and anyone else who happens to be on the road near you. One way to promote safety is to always wear your seat belt when the car is in motion. If you don't like wearing a seat belt or don't find the task to be very important, this list of reasons to wear a seat belt may just change your mind.

A SEAT BELT CAN SAVE LIVES

You are more than likely already familiar with the fact that wearing a seat belt can save your life, which is the most important reason to always have the safety belt buckled around you. However, there are plenty of other reasons to wear this protection, too. These various reasons can include:

SAFETY

As mentioned, seat belts promote safety. More specifically, seat belts can aid in the following:

- Preventing you from hitting the windshield
- Preventing you from being thrown from the vehicle
- Preventing you from banging around the vehicle and hitting the steering wheel, door, etc.
- Women who are pregnant are more protected when they're wearing a seat belt

IT'S THE LAW

That's right, wearing a seat belt is the law. If you're caught not wearing one, you could find yourself facing expensive fines and consequences.

AIR BAGS

Air bags are much more effective when the driver and passengers are wearing their seat belts. If you're not wearing your seat belt, then your body will most likely not remain in the position in which the airbag can protect you.

THE BEST DEFENSE

Seat belts are known to offer the best defense against the following:

- Road Hazards
- Aggressive Drivers
- Distracted Drivers
- Impaired Drivers

STAYING SAFE

You should now be familiar with and understand that there are plenty of reasons to wear a seat belt. It's important to remember that your actions don't just affect you, but others, too. Therefore, any time you're on the road, make safe decisions. ALWAYS buckle up whether you're the driver or a passenger. This applies to your personal vehicle as well as your work vehicle.

BE SAFE IN THE SUN



After the dark days of winter, it's a relief to see the sun and tempting to stay outdoors basking in its rays as often as possible. But before you do, it's a good idea to review sun safety.

How is the sun related to skin cancer?

The sun is a major source of Ultraviolet Radiation (UV), which can damage DNA, intensify the effects of aging, and cause cancer. The skin is the body's largest organ, so it's not surprising that skin cancer is the most common form of cancer. UV rays are the number one cause of basal and squamous cell cancer, and also contribute to melanoma.

Is skin cancer really that dangerous?

Yes. Although both basal and squamous cell carcinomas are slow-growing and rarely deadly, if left untreated they can spread to deeper areas of the skin, causing disfigurement. In some cases, these cancers can be life threatening. Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. It occurs when damaged skin cells mutate and begin to form cancerous tumors, which often resemble moles. Like the other forms of skin cancer, melanoma is highly curable if detected early.

Who is at risk?

Adults who have already experienced a lifetime of exposure to the sun are at greatest risk of developing skin cancer. If you have fair skin and burn easily, you are also at higher risk. If you have darker skin, however, don't think you've got a free pass. Skin cancer often goes undetected in people of color until its later stages, making it more dangerous and difficult to treat. Finally, those with a high concentration of moles, and those with a family history of skin cancer should be extra cautious and check skin regularly.

HOW TO STAY SAFE

Use common sense: The most obvious way to protect yourself from the sun's harmful rays is to stay in the shade, wear hats and clothing to cover the skin, and always apply sunscreen. Avoid being exposed during the middle of the day, when the sun's rays are most intense. Always keep babies and toddlers out of the sun, and teach healthy sun protection habits to younger children as early as possible.

Stay dry: If you plan to spend a lot of time at the beach or pool this summer, make sure to dry off and use a beach cover-up after taking a dip. Wet clothes and bathing suits don't protect the skin as well as dry, tightly woven fabrics.

Avoid burning: Getting sunburned as a child raises your risk of developing skin cancer later in life. And frequent burning, not extended exposure, increases your risk of developing melanoma, the most dangerous type of skin cancer. Sunburn causes long-term damage to skin cells and causes premature aging.

Pick the right sunscreen: Make sure to use a sunscreen that advertises "broad spectrum" coverage, which means that it will protect you from several different types of UV rays. Check that the sunscreen you choose has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. Always wear sunglasses, and be sure they block UV rays as well. And if you still have an old bottle of sunscreen laying around the house, check its expiration date before you use it; sunscreen does expire, and it loses effectiveness more quickly when exposed to high temperatures.

Apply sunscreen properly: Sunscreen should be applied early and often, especially if you're going in and out of the water. Insect repellents also reduce the effectiveness of sunscreen. Always use a generous amount, and don't neglect those hard-to-reach places, and if you need to, ask for help.

Know the facts: Arm yourself with the facts about sun damage. Two common myths are that it's safe to forgo sunscreen on cloudy days, and you can't get sun damage from tanning beds. But the biggest myth of all is that there is such a thing as a "healthy tan."

WEARABLE TRACKING DEVICES: DO THEY REALLY WORK?

Everybody seems to have a Fitbit these days; and while it might be annoying to listen to your co-workers brag about the number of steps they've counted, you might also be curious about these wearable tracking devices. So why all the excitement? Do wearable tracking devices actually work? And who needs to know how many steps they took, anyway? Keep reading to find out the answers to these questions and more.

WHAT IS A WEARABLE TRACKING DEVICE?

Simply, a wearable tracking device is exactly what it sounds like: it's a device that you wear (usually on your wrist; a few companies offer clip-ons) that may be able to track any number of things, from heart rate to steps taken to distance traveled to sleep patterns. Some have other, non-fitness related features, like GPS or an alarm system.

DO YOU REALLY NEED A HEALTH AND FITNESS TRACKER?

Not necessarily. But there are plenty of benefits to owning one. If you are extremely active, health-conscious, or if you participate in a sport like running or cycling, you will probably love having the ability to track your own every move and use the data to improve your performance. And those who are not very active but aspire to be may find that a fitness tracker gives them the accountability and motivation they need to get going. But not so fast: if you're only interested in one feature and you don't plan to make full use of the data tracking software, you may find that your smartphone will work just as well. A smartphone is just as accurate at counting steps and can check your heart rate, too.

WHAT'S THE DOWNSIDE?

If you're thinking about purchasing a health and fitness tracker, the main thing you should know is that there is a wide discrepancy between models and price points. If you plan to buy a fitness tracker, do your homework to make sure you're getting the device that's right for your lifestyle and budget.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

The key to getting the most out of a fitness tracker is making use of the information it gives you. What's the use in correlating your sleep patterns with your caffeine intake if you're not going to use those discoveries to get a better night's sleep? Just like with your workout, you'll get out of it only as much as you're willing to put in.

TO PREVENT HEAT RELATED ILLNESS AND FATALITIES:

- Drink water every 15 minutes, even if you are not thirsty.
- Rest in the shade to cool down.
- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing.
- Learn the signs of heat illness and what to do in an emergency.
- Keep an eye on fellow workers.
- "Easy does it" on your first days of work in the heat. You need to get used to it.



Working in full sunlight can increase heat index values by 15 degrees Fahrenheit. Keep this in mind and plan additional precautions for working in these conditions.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

Oswego County residents may drop off their household hazardous waste at the Bristol Hill Landfill, 3125 State Route 3, Volney on the following dates this month:

Wednesdays: June 8, 15, 22, and 29

Saturdays: June 4, 11, 18, and 25

There is no charge for Oswego County residents. Do not bring latex paint. Dried latex paint can be put in your trash.

The following HHW is acceptable:

Adhesives, Aerosols, Antifreeze, Auto Batteries, Ballasts (non PCB), Brake Fluid, Cements, Degreasers, Disinfectants, Dry Gas, Flea Products, Fluorescent Bulbs, Gasoline, Hobby Chemicals, Household Cleaners, Insect Repellants, Lacquers, Lighter Fluids, Lubricants, Mercury, Oil Based Paint, Paint Removers, Paint Thinners, Pesticides, Pool Chemicals, Rat Poisons, Rug Cleaners, Solvents, Turpentine, Varnish, Weed Killers, Wood Stains.

A complete list of acceptable materials may be found at: www.oswegocounty.com/dsw/hhw.html



ERGONOMIC ASSESSMENT: CHRISTINE BODY HAS BEEN DOING ERGONOMIC ASSESSMENTS SINCE 1996 AND IS AVAILABLE TO DO THEM HERE ON CAMPUS. SHE CAN BE REACHED AT 312-2770 AND WOULD BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR ISSUES.

JUNE WORD SEARCH

For a chance to win a great prize (more like an OK prize, but-hey, it's a PRIZE!), complete the Word Search and send it via e-mail to lisa.drake@oswego.edu OR through Campus Mail: Lisa Drake, 110 Lee Hall. Make sure to put your name on it! The winner for May was Cindy Collins. Look for: Driver Safety, Seat Belt, Buckle Up, Vehicle, Steering Wheel, Law, Air Bags, Driver, Passenger, Aggressive, Distracted, Impaired, Sun, Skin Cancer, Ultraviolet Radiation, Basal, Squamous, Melanoma, Risk, Sunscreen, Wearable Tracking Device, Heart Rate, Steps, Fitness, Sleep Pattern.

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NEVER LEAVE YOUR PETS IN A PARKED CAR!!!

Not even for a minute. Not even with the car running and air conditioner on. On a warm day, temperatures inside a vehicle can rise rapidly to dangerous levels. On an 85-degree day, for example, the temperature inside a car with the windows opened slightly can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes. After 30 minutes, the temperature will reach 120 degrees. Your pet may suffer irreversible organ damage or die.