



THE EHS CONNECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER-SEPTEMBER 2016

LABOR DAZE - PRIDE, CHAOS AND KEGS ON LABOR'S FIRST 'DAY'

On the morning of September 5, 1882, a crowd of spectators filled the sidewalks of lower Manhattan near city hall and along Broadway. They had come early, well before the Labor Day Parade marchers, to claim the best vantage points from which to view the first Labor Day Parade. A newspaper account of the day described "...men on horseback, men wearing regalia, men with society aprons, and men with flags, musical instruments, badges, and all the other paraphernalia of a procession."

The police, wary that a riot would break out, were out in force that morning as well. By 9 a.m., columns of police and club-wielding officers on horseback surrounded city hall.

By 10 a.m., the Grand Marshall of the parade, William McCabe, his aides and their police escort were all in place for the start of the parade. There was only one problem: none of the men had moved. The few marchers that had shown up had no music.

According to McCabe, the spectators began to suggest that he give up the idea of parading, but he was determined to start on time with the few marchers that had shown up. Suddenly, Mathew Maguire of the Central Labor Union of New York (and probably the father of Labor Day) ran across the lawn and told McCabe that two hundred marchers from the Jewelers Union of Newark Two had just crossed the ferry — and they had a band!

Just after 10 a.m., the marching jewelers turned onto lower Broadway — they were playing "When I First Put This Uniform On," from *Patience*, an opera by Gilbert and Sullivan. The police escort then took its place in the street. When the jewelers marched past McCabe and his aides, they followed in behind. Then, spectators began to join the march. Eventually there were 700 men in line in the first of three divisions of Labor Day marchers. Final reports of the total number of marchers ranged from 10,000 to 20,000 men and women.

With all of the pieces in place, the parade marched through lower Manhattan. The New York Tribune reported that, "The windows and roofs and even the lamp posts and awning frames were occupied by persons anxious to get a good view of the first parade in New York of workingmen of all trades united in one organization."

At noon, the marchers arrived at Reservoir Park, the termination point of the parade. While some returned to work, most continued on to the post-parade party at Wendel's Elm Park at 92nd Street and Ninth Avenue; even some unions that had not participated in the parade showed up to join in the post-parade festivities that included speeches, a picnic, an abundance of cigars and, "Lager beer kegs... mounted in every conceivable place."

From 1p.m. until 9 p.m. that night, nearly 25,000 union members and their families filled the park and celebrated the very first, and almost entirely disastrous, Labor Day.

From DOL.gov

WASH YOUR HANDS!!!

Handwashing is like a "do-it-yourself" vaccine—it involves five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry) you can take to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness so you can stay healthy. Regular handwashing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. It's quick, it's simple, and it can keep us all from getting sick. Handwashing is a win for everyone, except the germs.

Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. If clean, running water is not accessible, as is common in many parts of the world, use soap and available water. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to clean hands.

When should you wash your hands?

- BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PREPARING FOOD
- BEFORE EATING FOOD
- BEFORE AND AFTER CARING FOR SOMEONE WHO IS SICK
- BEFORE AND AFTER TREATING A CUT OR WOUND
- AFTER USING THE TOILET
- AFTER CHANGING DIAPERS OR CLEANING UP A CHILD WHO HAS USED THE TOILET
- AFTER BLOWING YOUR NOSE, COUGHING, OR SNEEZING
- AFTER TOUCHING AN ANIMAL, ANIMAL FEED, OR ANIMAL WASTE
- AFTER HANDLING PET FOOD OR PET TREATS
- AFTER TOUCHING GARBAGE

How should you wash your hands?

- **WET** YOUR HANDS WITH CLEAN, RUNNING WATER (WARM OR COLD), TURN OFF THE TAP, AND APPLY SOAP.
- **LATHER** YOUR HANDS BY RUBBING THEM TOGETHER WITH THE SOAP. BE SURE TO LATHER THE BACKS OF YOUR HANDS, BETWEEN YOUR FINGERS, AND UNDER YOUR NAILS.
- **SCRUB** YOUR HANDS FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS. NEED A TIMER? HUM THE "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" SONG FROM BEGINNING TO END TWICE.
- **RINSE** YOUR HANDS WELL UNDER CLEAN, RUNNING WATER.
- **DRY** YOUR HANDS USING A CLEAN TOWEL OR AIR DRY THEM.

Germ Farm



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.

POWER STRIP SAFETY



What would we do without our handy power strips? Those convenient blocks of electrical sockets, which enable us to convert one outlet into several, make it possible to plug in all the gear that we can't live without these days. A typical location for a power strip is the home office, where it helps computers, speakers, printers, monitors, and all sorts of other necessities come to life. But many households have power strips in multiple rooms, if not every room, since there are so many items that require plugging in these days. Hairstyling tools, cooking equipment, and phone chargers come to mind! If a power strip has 10 outlets, it's safe to assume you can go ahead and use them all, right? Not necessarily. In fact, power strips are culprits in many devastating house fires. Use the following power strip safety tips to protect your home and property:

- Learn the circuit capacity of the main outlet you are using, as well as the power requirements of the items you plan to plug into your power strip. If the requirements of the items exceed the circuit capacity, you are overloading the circuit and creating a fire hazard.
- Understand that a surge protector, which is a facet of some but not all power strips, may protect your electrical equipment (such as your computer) from damage in the event of a surge of electricity; it does not function to prevent fires.
- Using many power strips in your home is a sign that you have too few outlets. For fire prevention, arrange to have more outlets installed at your house and lessen your reliance on power strips.
- Never "piggy back" or create a "daisy chain" with power strips. This means plugging one power strip into another power strip to markedly increase the number of outlets. Power strips are not designed to be used this way, and doing so can result in a fire.
- Do not use standard power strips in moist environments, such as a bathroom, a kitchen countertop, or a garage that is not climate controlled. Water and power strips don't mix, and if they do, a fire may result. If you must use a power strip in an area that is prone to moisture, buy one that is specially designed to be safe in such conditions. If you require a power strip in your garage, have a professional electrician hard wire a moisture-resistant one and mount it to a wall.
- Outside, there are many hazards, including moist weather, falling debris, and even insects, all of which can compromise the safety of a power strip. There are power strips designed for outdoor use; only these are appropriate for use outside of the house. As is the case with garage power strips, it's smart to have an outdoor power strip mounted to a wall rather than left on the ground.

Know what you are buying. When you shop for power strips, look for the following: make sure they are UL (Underwriters Laboratory) or ETL (Electrical Testing Laboratories) certified; make sure you choose a power strip that is rated for the appropriate amount of amperage according to your needs. Choosing one that is rated for more amperage than you require is okay-this can help you avoid an overload.

Needless to say, if you notice anything out of the ordinary with your power strip, such as a failure to work, don't wait and see what happens, replace it promptly. Some electronics recycling services take unwanted power strips, as well as a variety of other materials, like USB cords and more, for green disposal.

BACKPACKS 101



A heavy backpack can injure the back, neck, and shoulders causing numbness in the arms and reducing blood flow to the surrounding muscles and tissues. They also create poor posture by encouraging the carrier to lean forward and round their shoulders, which reduces the ability to maintain balance and restricts movement.

To prevent back and neck pain from an overloaded backpack it is important to know the correct way to choose, pack, and carry a backpack.

Choosing the right backpack.

1. Choose a backpack that is proportionate to your body size and not larger than what is really needed. The top of the backpack should not extend higher than the top of the shoulders, and the bottom should not fall below the top of the hipbone (i.e. try not to let it hang over your butt).
2. Select a backpack made of lightweight material such as vinyl or canvas instead of leather. I know leather looks and wears nice but it comes with a price in more ways than one. :)
3. The shoulder straps should be at least two inches wide, adjustable, and padded. Ensure that they do not cut into or fit too snugly around the arms and armpits. Poorly designed shoulder straps can dig deep into muscles causing strain and pinched nerves.
4. A backpack should have a padded back for added protection and comfort.
5. A hip strap or waist belt helps to effectively redistribute as much as 50 to 70 percent of the weight off the upper body and onto the pelvis, equalizing the strain on the bones, joints, and muscles.
6. Choose a backpack that has several individual pockets instead of one large compartment. This will help to distribute the weight evenly and keep contents from shifting.
7. Explore other options such as a backpack style carrier with wheels and a pull handle for easy rolling.

Packing your backpack.

1. **Backpacks should never exceed 15 percent of your body weight (i.e. a 90 pound child should not carry more than 14 pounds in a backpack). For elementary school children try to keep the weight in their packs below 10 percent of their body weight.**
2. Ensure the weight is evenly distributed in the backpack.
3. Pack the heaviest items closest to the body as this reduces strain as weight is closer to the center of gravity of the body.
4. Do not overload the backpack and only carry items that are needed.
5. Pack odd shaped items on the outside so they do not dig into your back or side.

Carrying your backpack.

1. Wear both shoulder straps at the same time and adjust them so the pack fits snugly to the body. Be sure it does not dangle loosely to the side. You should be able to slide your hand between the backpack and your back. This positioning will reduce strain on your back, shoulders, and neck.
2. Using the hip strap or waist belt reduces strain on your back and transfers some of the load to your hips and pelvis.
3. A backpack that is too low will cause you to lean forward and carry the full weight on the upper back.

SEPTEMBER 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 August was Lorraine Bartlett. Look for: Labor Day, William McCabe, Central Labor Union, Handwashing, Germs, Diseases, Soap, Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry, Power Strip, Outlets, Circuit Capacity, Surge, Electricity, Fire Prevention, Piggy Back, Daisy Chain, Underwriters Laboratory, Backpack, Pain, Proportionate, Shoulder Straps, Strain, Pinched Nerves, Gravity.

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CALVIN SAYS: THE WEATHER IS GETTING COOLER AND IT'S A GREAT TIME TO GET OUT AND WALK YOUR DOG! THE EXERCISE IS GREAT FOR BOTH OF YOU! IF YOU'VE NEVER WALKED THE TRAILS AT RICE CREEK OR FALLBROOK, CHECK THEM OUT. MAKE SURE TO USE TICK PREVENTION, AND CHECK YOURSELF AND YOUR DOG FOR TICKS AFTER A WALK IN THE WOODS.

DUTCHISM FOR SEPTEMBER

SEASONS

FROM BUD TO LEAF, I GIVE LIFE TO THE TREE,
 TIME HAS COME TO SET ME FREE
 THE EARTH ACCEPTS ME A WELCOMED SON,
 I BID GOODNIGHT TO THE AUTUMN SUN.

RJF