Fire Won’t Wait ... Plan Your Escape

Fire can spread rapidly through a home, leaving as little as 2 minutes to escape once the alarm sounds. Your ability to get out safely depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning. The National Fire Protection Association (http://www.nfpa.org/index.asp) recommends involving your family in planning and practicing a fire escape strategy.

Make an escape plan

Gather your family and draw a home escape plan, marking 2 ways out of every room.

Choose an outside meeting place (i.e., a tree, light post, or neighbor’s house) and mark the location on your escape plan. Make sure your street number is clearly visible from the road. If not, paint it on the curb or install house numbers so emergency responders can find your home.

Practice your plan

Have fire drills night and day with everyone in your home twice a year. Practice reduces the chances of panic and injury during a real emergency.

Assign someone to assist infants, older adults, or family members with mobility limitations in the fire drill and in the event of an emergency. Assign a backup person too, in case the designee is not home during the emergency.

Be prepared to escape under smoke if necessary. Practice getting low and going under the smoke to your exit during your fire drill. Closing doors on your way out slows the spread of fire, giving you more time to escape.

When a real fire happens

Unless a small fire can be easily controlled, leave it to professional firefighters. Concentrate on getting out safely. Follow your plan.

Once you’re out, stay out! Do not go back into a burning building. If someone is missing, inform 911 when you call.

In some cases, smoke or fire may prevent you from getting out. To prepare for an emergency like this, practice “sealing yourself in for safety.” Close doors between you and the fire. Seal door cracks and air vents with duct tape or towels to block smoke. Open windows to let in fresh air. Call the fire department to report your exact location. Wave a flashlight or cloth at the window to signal your location.

Protect Your Back

Tips for Safe Lifting

Nearly 80% of us will experience back pain sometime in our lives. How do you stay in the 20% column?

Most back injuries result from incorrect lifting. You can hurt your back bending over to pick up a penny if you don’t use proper technique.

Before lifting anything, think about the load you’ll be lifting. Can you safely lift it alone? Maybe you can split the load into several smaller ones, or get help.

If the load is manageable, safe lifting means keeping your back aligned while you lift, maintaining your center of balance, and using your strong leg muscles to do the actual lifting and lowering. Follow these basic techniques to protect your back:

continued on back ... see Tips for Safe Lifting

Driving a UC Vehicle or Electric Cart?

Your personal auto insurance rates and driving record may be affected if you’re in a collision in a UC-owned vehicle or electric cart. Schedule a short workshop for your staff to learn about the responsibilities of driving UC vehicles: contact EH&S Risk Management at (858) 246-0369.
Tips for Safe Lifting
... continued

1. **Bend your knees!** Stand as close to the load as you can, with the knees well bent and your back in a comfortable position (upright, but not necessarily straight).

2. **Hug the load.** Get as close to the load as possible. Tighten your stomach muscles and gradually straighten your legs to a standing position to lift the load.

3. **Keep your back upright as you lift.** Whether you’re lifting or putting down the load, don’t add the weight of your upper body to the load by bending at the waist.

4. **Avoid twisting.** Come to an upright position, then pivot using your feet. As you carry the load, change direction with your feet, not by twisting your body. When you’re ready to set the load down, have your feet pointed toward the load.

5. **Lower the load with equal care.** Gradually **bend your knees** and **keep your back upright** as you set the load down. If possible, choose a place other than the floor to set down the load, so it will be easier to pick up if it must be moved again.

You’ve put the load down but you still have to come back up. Gradually straighten your bent knees to a standing position.

Increase your ergonomic awareness. Find more information on Blink at [http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergo](http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergo).

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**Bend Your Knees!**

Why it’s important to bend your knees and keep your back upright when you lift or lower a load:

When you bend at the waist to lift or lower a load, you’re using your body like a construction crane. Your back strains to handle the weight of both the object and the weight of your head and torso.

Bending your knees helps keep your upper body weight balanced over your legs. Move close to the load to bring its weight nearer to your center of balance. Your strong leg muscles can then do the work of lifting and lowering instead of your back.

**Web-based Training:** Learn how to prevent back injury if you lift, carry, sit too much, or perform other activities that may place demands on the back (and isn’t that everyone?). Review *Maintaining a Healthy Back*, a Web-based tutorial at [https://enrollmentcentral.ucsd.edu/sed_course.cfm?&cdcrs=BACKSAFE](https://enrollmentcentral.ucsd.edu/sed_course.cfm?&cdcrs=BACKSAFE).

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**Ergonomic Resource Fund**

[http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergofund](http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergofund)

Campus-funded employees who have completed ergonomic training may apply for funding assistance from Environment, Health & Safety to help purchase ergonomically-designed products from Marketplace. Funding amounts are based on availability of funds according to the scale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total purchase</th>
<th>EH&amp;S funding per employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$100 - $200</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$301 - $400</td>
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<tr>
<td>$400 - greater</td>
<td>$200</td>
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</table>

Find out how to qualify and apply for funding on Blink at [http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergofund](http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ergofund).

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**Integrated Safety and Environmental Management (ISEM)**

[http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ISEM](http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ISEM)

At UCSD, individual staff and their supervisor are responsible for their safety and for environmental protection. Learn how to use the 5-step ISEM framework to manage that responsibility by incorporating safety and environmental best practices into all work activities. Get details at [http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ISEM](http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/ISEM).

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**What’s Bugging You?**

Find strategies for pest prevention and control and learn how to request campus pest services at [http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/pests](http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/pests).