

# Newsletter

## Spotlight on Safety

National Safety Council

February 2015



### About the National Safety Council:

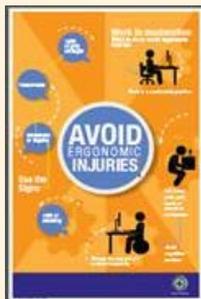
The National Safety Council saves



lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads through leadership, research, education and advocacy. Visit us at [nsc.org](http://nsc.org) for up-to-date industry news, information and tools to take your safety program to the next level.

### Featured Safety Poster

#### "Ergonomic Injuries"



Reminders to ensure your workstation is ergonomically correct.

[Downloadable poster.](#)

### Featured Webinar



Visit our [Online Learning Library](#) to view our extensive webinar selection.

Welcome to *Spotlight on Safety*, an e-newsletter brought to you by the Department of the Interior Office of Occupational Safety and Health in partnership with the National Safety Council. We hope you will find this service of value. Send feedback or ideas on topics you would like to see to [membershipinfo@nsc.org](mailto:membershipinfo@nsc.org). Please put "Department of the Interior feedback" in the subject line.

### 5-Minute Safety Talk: Know the Facts about Backs

Back injury is the most common workplace injury, second only to the common cold as the most frequent reason for missing work.



While there is still no cure for the common cold, there are ergonomic ways to avoid back injuries. Ergonomics experts' mission is to find the easiest ways for you to relieve stress on your body and prevent such injuries at work.

There is a lot you can do to prevent workplace strain and pain. Use our [5-Minute Safety Talk](#) to spread the word.

### On the Job Injuries



Employees in the United States reported more than 340,000 cases of sprains and strains, 8,300 cases of carpal tunnel syndrome and more than 109,000 cases of soreness or pain in 2011. (NSC Injury Facts 2014). Overexertion was the No. 1 cause of disabling workplace injuries, with nearly 330,000 cases reported.

Ergonomic and musculoskeletal injuries in the workplace are not limited to heavy-machine operators, farmers and construction workers. Workers in retail sales, information technology and those with so-called "desk" jobs also are at risk. But, these injuries can be prevented.

This month's suggested topic "Mastering the Tools of the Ergonomics Trade."

## NSC Safety Awards

Employee engagement is key to a successful safety program! An award from the National Safety Council shows them you appreciate their efforts.

Safety awards from NSC instill employee pride; earn respect from your customers, community and peers; and place you one step ahead of your competition. [Learn more.](#)



## Learn about all the benefits available to you in our Member Benefits Guide



[See the benefits that are available to you and ALL your employees](#)

[Ergonomics](#) is the "scientific study of people at work," according to the Centers for Disease Control. The goal of ergonomics is to reduce workers' stress and injury by designing work spaces that interact most efficiently and comfortably with each employee's physical capabilities. When the work environment is not ideal, workers can suffer ergonomic injuries via:

- \* Overuse or repetitive use of muscles
- \* Bad posture
- \* Improper bending or stretching

Ergonomic injury is cumulative. Symptoms can include everything from posture problems and intermittent discomfort, to tendonitis, chronic pain and disability. The sooner environmental changes can take place, the better.

National Safety Council Research reveals ergonomics issues are the No. 1 cause of workplace injuries. The total cost of workplace injury and illness is nearly \$200 billion a year. Employers who provide ergonomics training for all employees and [develop workplace programs](#), such as individual worksite evaluations, will benefit not only their workers but their businesses, as well.

Read more about [ergonomics and musculoskeletal problems](#) on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control website. OSHA also provides this FAQ titled, "[Effective Ergonomics: Strategy for Success](#)."

## Ergonomic Tips for your Workstation

Even slight adjustments can make a big difference in employees' health and wellbeing. These fixes don't have to cost an arm and a leg, either. Check out a few of the simple changes everyone in your organization can make, as recommended by NSC:



- \* Move phone closer to its use area.
- \* Attach a document holder to the computer's display terminal when referring to notes and typing.
- \* Place a footrest under the desk to keep legs elevated.
- \* Adjust the height of the workstation and align the computer terminal according to the height of the user.
- \* Use a wrist rest for keyboard and mouse.
- \* Make sure lighting is optimal.
- \* Take frequent stretching breaks.
- \* Use lift-assists or carts to move equipment.

## Assess your Workstation

The NSC Ergonomic Workstation Risk Assessment form is a great way to evaluate your employees' work environment. It includes a comprehensive, 38-point ergonomic risk checklist that will result in a risk rating for each employee workstation. Employers then will be guided to create a corrective action plan.

[Check out the NSC ergonomic assessment form here.](#)

