AP SAFETY TRAINING

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REMOTE WORKER: *Safety, Health and Security* (Concise)

Leader's Guide, Fact Sheet & Quiz

This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation.

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING
Here are a few suggestions for using this program:

a) Review the contents of the Fact Sheet that immediately follows this page to familiarize yourself with the program topic and the training points discussed in the program. The Fact Sheet also includes a list of Program Objectives that details the information that participants should learn from watching the program.

b) If required by your organization, make an attendance record to be signed by each participant to document the training to be conducted.

c) Prepare the area and equipment to be used for the training. Make sure the watching environment is comfortable and free from outside distractions. Also, ensure that participants can see and hear the TV screen or computer monitor without obstructions.

d) Make copies of the Review Quiz included at the end of this Leader's Guide to be completed by participants at the conclusion of the presentation. Be aware that the page containing the answers to the quiz comes <u>before</u> the quiz itself, which is on the final page.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION
a) Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person an opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.

b) Introduce the program by its title and explain to participants what they are expected to learn as stated in the Program Objectives of the Fact Sheet.

c) Play the program without interruption. Upon completion, lead discussions about your organization's specific policies regarding the subject matter. Make sure to note any unique hazards associated with the program's topic that participants may encounter while performing their job duties at your facility.

d) Hand out copies of the review quiz to all of the participants and make sure each one completes it before concluding the training session.

LENGTH: 11 MINUTES

PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:
In today's technology driven and ever-changing world, the ability and necessity of working from home or at a remote location is on the rise. Generally referred to as "remote work", this working arrangement commonly finds workers performing their job duties from a "home office" or a "home-based worksite." There are many benefits of remote work for both the employee and employer; however, it is important that all parties understand their responsibilities related to the safety and health of remote workers as well as the cyber security of their operations. This program explains those responsibilities as well as OSHA regulatory requirements regarding remote work and the policies that employers use to manage safety responsibilities for their employees. The program also discusses in detail the various hazards that can be found in the home work environment and the safe practices remote workers can follow to control them.

Topics include selecting a location for a home workspace, maintaining a "workplace mindset", fall prevention and ergonomics for the remote worker.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:
After watching the program, the participant should be able to explain the following:
• What the remote work responsibilities are for both the employee and the employer;
• How to select a suitable location for a home workspace;
• How to maintain a "workplace mindset";
• What precautions to take to prevent slips, trips and falls in the home workspace;
• How to maintain good posture and avoid repetitive movements when working at home.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:

EMPLOYEE & EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES
• In today's technology driven and ever-changing world, the ability and necessity of working from home or at a remote location is on the rise. Generally referred to as "remote work", this working arrangement commonly finds workers performing their job duties from a "home office" or a "home-based worksite."
• There are many benefits of remote work for both the employee and employer; however, it is important that all parties understand their responsibilities related to the safety and health of remote workers as well as the cyber security of their operations.
• The employer is responsible for the safety and health of the remote worker while he or she is performing their job duties and is also responsible for any hazards caused by materials, equipment, or work processes which the employer provides or requires to be used in an employee's home office or home-based worksite.
• The employee is responsible to follow the specific safety and health rules and procedures established for remote workers by their organization as well as continuing to follow all other safety training he or she may have received on more general topics.
• For example, remote workers should follow safe work practices related to fire prevention, housekeeping, electrical safety, fall prevention and ergonomics.
• Employers often manage their employee oversite responsibilities through remote work agreements and various safety and health checklists assigned to the remote worker.
• In addition, it is critical that a remote worker understand and follow all computer security and cyber security protocols established by their employer.
• When all parties involved in remote work understand their responsibilities and establish clear lines of communication and expectations, the remote working relationship can be safe, healthy and productive for all concerned.

POLICIES & GUIDELINES
• Many employers utilize remote work agreements and various safety and health checklists as a way to manage their safety and health responsibilities for employees who work remotely.
• These types of agreements typically outline the employer's expectations for productivity and accountability for remote workers as well as the expectations and requirements used to ensure the employee's safety while working remotely.
• Remote worker agreements often include a detailed home safety checklist that must be performed and submitted to the employer before the employee is allowed to begin their home-based operations.
• The safety checklist should ensure that the employee's work area is free of obvious hazards, does not contain fire or electrical hazards and can be configured to conform with appropriate ergonomic practices and principles.
• Periodic re-inspections are typically required as well as a means by which a home-based employee can report any safety related issues or concerns.
• If you are a remote worker, take these types of agreements, inspections and checklists seriously. You have a personal responsibility and an obligation to your employer to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

SELECTING A LOCATION FOR A HOME WORKSPACE
• One of the most important considerations for a remote worker is selecting an appropriate location for the workspace. Comfort, productivity and safety are important considerations when locating a home office or home-based worksite.
• Select an area away from the main traffic flow of other people or activities in the home.
• Try to select a work area that is reasonably quiet and free of distractions.
• If possible, select an area that you can designate as your home office and keep it separate and apart from other home-based activities for the duration of your remote work.
• Consistently working in the same designated area improves your ability to concentrate on your tasks and control any safety hazards in the area.
• Repeatedly moving around the house, from the couch to the dining room table or to the bedroom, can keep a worker unsettled and unproductive.
• Make sure the temperature, ventilation and lighting in the area are adequate for the type of work you plan to perform.
• The selected work area should have enough electrical outlets to safely power your equipment and make sure there are at least two exit routes available in the event of a fire or other emergency.

MAINTAINING A 'WORKPLACE MINDSET'
• In order to be successful, productive and healthy, a remote worker must strive to maintain a "workplace mindset."
• Having a workplace mindset means a worker is well organized, keeps to a schedule, dresses appropriately and wears any required personal protective equipment, or PPE.
• Workers should establish a normal workplace routine with defined time slots for working hours and definitive time periods for lunch, stretch breaks or non-work activities.
• To avoid feeling isolated, remote workers should stay in touch with their supervisor and fellow workers through periodic video meetings, conference calls and group emails.
• It's important to dress professionally and appropriately for your job duties and position. Keep in mind that you represent the company or organization and you may be called on to appear on a video conference at any time.
• Dressing appropriately for work also includes following any work-related dress code and PPE requirements.
• At a minimum, remote workers should wear sturdy, closed toed shoes while working in their home office. Open toed footwear is a safety hazard, no matter where you are working.
• Employees performing work at a home-based worksite must wear the PPE required for the specific tasks they perform.

FALL PREVENTION
• Slips, trips and falls are one of the leading causes of injuries and fatalities both on the job and at home. This is why fall prevention must be a key component of any safety program for remote workers.
• The remote worker safety checklist must include key elements for fall prevention and the remote worker must verify that the workspace is free of slip and trip hazards.
• Every work area, include those in a worker's home, must remain free of slip, trip and fall hazards.

- Two common fall hazards in a home are cords and rugs.
- Keep all cords out of areas of traffic flow and position them where they not underfoot. If this can't be avoided, fasten them securely to the floor to reduce the tripping hazard.
- Keep in mind that extension cords are not intended to be permanent. You may need to have an electrician install additional outlets to eliminate the need for extension cords.
- Rugs must remain flat on the floor, be sure to work out any humps or lumps.
- Place some type of non-skid tape or no-slip underlayer between a rug and the floor to prevent the rug from sliding.
- Slips and trips can also be prevented through good housekeeping. Don't allow clutter such as toys, dirty clothes or excess supplies to accumulate in your home or work area.
- Be especially mindful not to store any items on stairs.
- All travel paths must remain clear of debris and illuminated adequately so they may always be navigated safely.
- Any stairs that must be climbed or descended must be in good condition and have a sturdy handrail.
- Home-based workers must also be responsible to keep their exterior walkways and stairs free of slip and trip hazards.

ERGONOMICS FOR THE REMOTE WORKER
- Ergonomics, posture and movement are primary considerations when it comes to the safety and health of remote workers.
- Ergonomics is the proper fitting of the workstation to accommodate the safe posture and movements of the worker, rather than forcing the worker to fit into a poorly arranged workstation.
- Some things to consider include chair height, the distance to the monitor and the location of commonly used items.
- The chair should support the lumbar, or lower, area of the spine. If the back rest alone doesn't accomplish this, consider using an additional lumbar support or cushion.
- The height of the chair should be adjusted to allow the thighs to be parallel to the floor. If the height of your chair is not adjustable, you will need to select a chair that is the correct height for you.
- If your feet are not flat on the floor in this position, then you should use a footrest.
- If the chair has adjustable armrests, you should adjust them so your arms gently rest on the armrests while your shoulders are in relaxed position.
- With the chair properly adjusted, your knees, hips and elbows should be at approximately a 90-degree angle. This is the "neutral" position for these joints.
- Do not place the monitor off to the side. Instead, place the monitor directly in front of you, about arm's length away. The top of the screen should be at or slightly below eye level.
- People who wear bifocals may find that lowering the monitor an additional inch or two makes for more comfortable viewing.
- Position the keyboard and mouse so you do not have to stretch to reach them.
- Your wrists should be flat when typing, not tilted down and not tilted back. You may need to raise or lower the keyboard to maintain this neutral wrist position or use a wrist pad to raise the wrists to the proper level.
- Frequent users of laptops should find a way to use a full-sized keyboard and monitor in order to create an ergonomically appropriate workstation. Many companies will provide a docking station to their remote workers for this purpose.
- Keep your phone, reference materials and other frequently used items within reach to prevent overreaching, which can cause muscle strain and back pain.
- To alleviate neck and shoulder pain, avoid cradling the telephone receiver between your head and shoulder.
- If telephone use is a large part of your job, you should utilize a comfortable headset to reduce the ergonomic strain of holding a handset.
- It's important to avoid sitting in the same posture or repeating the same movements for extended periods of time. Avoid this by taking periodic stretch breaks, changing positions or switching between job tasks.

ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUIZ

1. a

2. b

3. a

4. b

5. b

6. a

7. d

8. c

9. a

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REVIEW QUIZ

The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.

Name_____Date_____

1. The _____ is responsible for any hazards caused by materials, equipment, or work processes that the employer provides or requires to be used in an employee's home office or home-based worksite.

a. Employer
b. Employee

2. OSHA does NOT make a distinction between a home office and a home-based worksite.

a. True
b. False

3. An employee's house itself and the employee's furnishings are NOT regulated by OSHA.

a. True
b. False

4. When selecting an appropriate area for a home workspace, you should make sure there are at least _____ exit routes available in the event of an emergency.

a. 1
b. 2
c. 3

5. Dressing professionally and appropriately for your job duties and position is NOT important in the home work environment.

a. True
b. False

6. A fire safety plan must ensure there are an adequate number of working smoke detectors in the home as well as in the designated workspace.

a. True
b. False

7. According to the National Fire Protection Association, fires related to _____ are the most common type of home fire.

a. Space heaters
b. Overloaded electrical outlets
c. Smoking
d. Cooking

8. When your work chair is properly adjusted, your knees, hips and elbows should be at approximately a _____ angle.

a. 45-degree
b. 60 degree
c. 90-degree

9. Your wrists should be _____ when typing.

a. Flat
b. Tilted down
c. Tilted back