

# UMS Safety Support Updates, News and Other Topics of Interest

## June 2017

### Topics in this newsletter

- This Month's Safety Reminder – Office Ergonomics
- What Were They Thinking?
- Spot the Safety Violation



### This Month's Safety Reminder – Office Ergonomics – Work Shouldn't Hurt

When talking about office ergonomics, there's a lot to consider regarding your computer workstation (e.g., the monitor, mouse, and keyboard, desk, etc.). But this time, we'll focus on the chair.

A well designed chair, that's properly adjusted, will have the following features:

- The seat height is adjustable.
  - ✓ Allows you to adjust the chair so your feet can be properly supported on the floor or a footrest – especially if your desk is not height adjustable.
- An adjustable backrest to conform to the natural curve of your spine.
  - ✓ Height adjustable with a lumbar support to fit your into the small of your lower back.
    - If your chair doesn't have lumbar support adjustments built-in, try using a rolled up towel or small pillow to support your lower back.
  - ✓ Allows you to recline at least 15 degrees from the vertical and lock or be tension adjustable to provide adequate resistance to lower back movement.
  - ✓ Ability to move forward and backward to support your thighs in addition to your back.
- A seat pan that is padded and has a front that slopes down slightly (waterfall edge)
  - ✓ Adjust the seat pan depth to support your thighs without contact between the back of the your knees and the front edge of the seat pan and still allow for adequate back support
- Armrests that are adjustable
  - ✓ The armrest, when properly adjusted, should allow for your arms to hang freely down by your sides. When your arms are at 90°, the armrest should barely touch the underside of your arm. You may need to remove the armrests if you can't achieve this even with the armrests at the lowest position.
- Base/Casters
  - ✓ The base should have a five-legged base to minimize tipping (four – or fewer legs and the chair becomes too unstable).
  - ✓ Make sure you have casters that are smooth so you can roll across the floor surface or reposition your chair easily without straining.

If you are finding that your chair is causing you pain or discomfort, discuss it with your supervisor. Sometimes all it takes is an easy fix such as a rolled towel as a lumbar support, or a small box or books for a footrest, or by making adjustments. But if you need further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact Safety and Environmental Management at 581-4055 or email us at [sem@maine.edu](mailto:sem@maine.edu). In cooperation with our Worker's Compensation insurance (MEMIC) we can provide supervisors and employees with guidance for a properly setup workstation.

Reminder: Don't forget, if you operate a computer for four (4) or more hours a day, then you're required under Maine DOL laws to have computer workstation training. You may access the computer workstation training by going to <http://sem.umaine.edu/safety-training/>



## What Were They Thinking?

*Not a UMS campus work-area image(s)*



## Spot the Safety Violation



*UMS campus work-area image(s)*

*NOTE: When we observe these hazards, we immediately notify the area supervisor or the campus Facilities Management.*

