

RESIG

STAYING ERGONOMIC #8 Ergonomics and Laptops

The design of a laptop (with the screen attached to the keyboard) can force users into a trade-off between poor neck/head posture and poor hand/wrist posture.

When the screen is at the right height to maintain good neck/head posture, the keyboard is too high which forces the user into bad hand/wrist posture.

When the keyboard is at the right height to maintain good hand/wrist posture, the screen is too low which forces the user into bad neck/head posture. Here are some quick tips to keep you ergonomic with your laptop:

1. **For Short Term Use - Take the laptop off your lap.** Even though it is called a laptop you may not want to use it on top of your lap. This position requires you to slouch down with your head forward to see the screen, loading your cervical spine with dozens of extra pounds of pressure. If you must work without a desk, try utilizing a binder or a computer bag on your lap to elevate the screen and keyboard. This would be for intermittent use – not long term.
2. **For Long Term Use - Raise your screen.** Elevate the laptop a few inches while on your desk. You can use books or a small box even. Your eyes should naturally hit the top third of your screen when looking straight ahead.
3. **Utilize a separate keyboard and mouse.** Now that the screen is raised. Make sure you have an external keyboard and mouse in place. This allows you to keep your shoulders and arms relaxed and at a good neutral height for keying/mouse work.
4. **Increase font size.** Leaning forward to view the screen can be mitigated by increasing font size. This will help avoid neck strain.
5. **Clean your screen periodically.** Remove dust and dirt which will help reduce eye strain as well.
6. **Take your micro pauses.** Remember the 20/20/20 rule. For every 20 minutes, take 20 seconds and focus on something 20 feet away. This is a good time to just stand up and take a quick stretch break.
7. **Properly manage cords.** Laptops typically have power cords. Be aware of cord management to avoid trip hazards.



Ergonomic Laptop Setup Illustration



Incorrect



Incorrect



Incorrect



Correct



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY SERVICES

- Active Shooter Response Training
- Assessment of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Backsafe® Program
- Behavioral Threat Assessment Training
- Cal/OSHA 10 Training
- Cal/OSHA Citation Assistance
- Cal/OSHA Customized In-Person Safety Training including, Hazard Communication, IIPP, Bloodborne Pathogens, Lockout/Tagout, and Heat Illness Prevention
- CSRM Program
- Develop Mitigation Programs
- Emergency Services Training and Assistance
- Ergonomics Program
- Fitness for Duty Program
- GETS Program
- Interactive Process Training
- Job Safety Analysis (JSA)
- Management of the Safety Incentive Funds Program
- Occupational Accident and Illness Investigations
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Assessments
- Playground Safety Inspections
- Playground Supervision and Maintenance Training
- Post-Offer-Pre-Placement (POPP) Program
- Public School Works online training platform
- Qualitative Risk Assessments
- Return to Work Program
- Safety Program Review
- School Action for Safety and Health (SASH) Training
- Site Safety Inspections (Cal/OSHA and EPA Compliance)
- Sitting Safe® Program
- STOPit Program

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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FROM RESIG'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Testing- (*CO₂ is not a typical health risk but elevated concentrations may indicate ventilation issues.*)
- Chemical Product Evaluations (SDS Review)
- Cleanliness Issues
- COVID-19 Resources and Compliance Assistance
- Drinking Water Quality Testing
- Electromagnetic Field (EMF) and Radio-Frequency Surveys
- Fire and Smoke Restoration Technician Training
- Formaldehyde Testing
- Indoor Allergen and Endotoxin testing (*Dogs, Cats, Dust Mites, Rat, Mouse, Cockroaches*)
- Industrial Hygiene investigations and testing for potential chemical exposures in classrooms and offices (*Volatile Organic Compounds*)
- Material Identification Analysis
- Occupational Noise Assessments
- Odor Source Investigations
- Particulates/Dust Testing
- Pesticide Issues
- Post-Remediation Clearance Testing
- Proactive Environmental Training Services, including AHERA
- Proactive Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) testing in classrooms and offices, including mold and environmental bacteria
- Respirable Silica Testing
- Sewage Contamination Testing
- Sick Building Syndrome (building is making me sick) and Building-Related Illness Investigations
- U.S. EPA-Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule Training (lead safety)
- Water Intrusion and Moisture Assessments
- Welding Fume Exposure Testing
- Wildfire Smoke Soot/Char/Ash Assessments

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7 Safety Tips for Custodial and Maintenance Staff in Schools



Let's explore seven essential safety tips to ensure the safety and wellbeing of custodial and maintenance staff. By focusing on training, ergonomic practices, chemical safety, hazard reporting systems, heat safety, lawn mower best practices, and providing ongoing support and resources, schools can create a safer working environment for their staff.

1. Training: Building a Foundation for Safety Excellence

Comprehensive and ongoing training is one of the best preventive measures for any type of hazard in school maintenance work. These training programs should cover topics like safety protocols, equipment operation, emergency procedures, and hazard identification. You'll want to be sure your training program complies with board, state, and federal guidelines. By investing in regular training sessions and certifications, schools empower their staff to handle tasks safely and confidently. Implementing engaging training methods has been shown to improve employee knowledge, and **reduce accidents, injuries, and illness**. The training should include ways to minimize the risk of injuries and exposure to hazardous substances. Wherever possible, it's important to customize the training to the specific equipment, tasks, and hazardous conditions your staff regularly comes across.

2. Ergonomic Practices: Prioritizing Staff Well-being

Custodial and maintenance work often involves repetitive movements and physical exertion, which can lead to musculoskeletal disorders. Implementing ergonomic practices is one of our safety tips for custodial and maintenance staff in schools because it's crucial to prioritize staff well-being.

Additionally, encourage staff to use ergonomic techniques, such as proper lifting and bending, to reduce strain and minimize the risk of injuries. Encouraging staff to stretch before engaging in physical tasks along with taking breaks to alleviate muscle fatigue are effective ways to prevent workplace injuries.

3. Chemical Safety: Handling Hazardous Substances with Care

Custodial and maintenance staff often work with various cleaning agents and chemicals which could lead to **chemical spills** or injury. It is crucial to provide proper training on safe handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances. Schools should ensure that staff members have access to safety data sheets (SDS) and understand the potential hazards associated with each chemical they use. Implement labeling systems to clearly identify containers and educate staff on the proper use of PPE when handling chemicals. Regular inspections of storage areas should be conducted to ensure compliance with safety regulations.

4. Hazard Reporting System: Encouraging a Culture of Safety

Establishing a robust **hazard reporting system** is vital for proactive risk management and maintaining a safe work environment for custodial staff during the summer season. Encourage all staff to report any potential hazards or safety

concerns promptly. Implement a streamlined reporting process that includes clear channels of communication and anonymous reporting options. It is essential to acknowledge staff contributions to safety and address reported issues in a timely manner. This helps prevent under-reporting, one of the biggest challenges to implementing an effective hazard reporting program. By fostering a culture of safety and open communication, schools empower their staff to actively participate in creating a safer work environment.

5. Heat Safety: Protecting Against High Temperatures

Schools should implement heat safety measures to protect custodial or maintenance working outdoors or in non-airconditioned areas. Provide shaded rest areas where staff members can take breaks and cool down. Ensure access to cool drinking water and encourage regular hydration. Schedule tasks during cooler parts of the day when possible. Educate staff on recognizing the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke and emphasize the importance of taking breaks and seeking medical attention if necessary.

6. Lawn Mower Best Practices: Ensuring Safe Operations

For custodial and maintenance staff involved in groundskeeping, proper lawn mower safety is crucial. It's estimated that 75,000 people are injured or killed in lawn mower accidents, and the majority of the accidents are caused by human error. Provide training on safe mower operation, maintenance procedures, and the use of PPE like safety goggles and hearing protection. Regular maintenance and inspection of mowers should be conducted to ensure their safe and efficient operation. Staff should be trained to identify potential hazards on the grounds, such as hidden obstacles or uneven terrain, and take appropriate precautions to prevent accidents.

7. Ongoing Support and Resources: Nurturing a Safety Culture

Maintaining a safe work environment for custodial staff requires building a culture of safety. Schools should provide ongoing support, resources, and training opportunities for staff to enhance their safety knowledge and skills. Regular safety meetings can serve as platforms for discussing concerns, sharing best practices, and providing updates on safety protocols. Invest in relevant safety resources, such as online training platforms, safety manuals, and reference materials, to empower staff members to stay informed and up-to-date with safety practices.

By prioritizing the safety of custodial and maintenance staff through training, ergonomic practices, chemical safety, hazard reporting systems, heat safety measures, lawn mower best practices, and ongoing support, districts can create a culture of safety within their schools. These proactive measures not only protect staff members but also contribute to improved productivity, reduced absenteeism, and overall operational excellence. By implementing the recommended safety tips and providing the necessary resources, schools can ensure a safer and healthier working environment for their custodial and maintenance staff.

For more information on Public School Works please contact:

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Partnering together to bring your district safety solutions to create healthier school communities

STOPit is the nation's leading Anonymous Reporting System and Safety Program that teaches how to identify and get help for individuals displaying violent, unsafe or harmful behaviors.

STOPit deters inappropriate behaviors in schools, allowing students, staff, and parents to report behaviors such as bullying, sexual misconduct, school threats, mental health issues and other safety concerns at any time - right from their phones.



How STOPit Works

The STOPit Mobile app, Web app, and Hotline provide a safe and comfortable way for students to share information anonymously with administrators in real-time.

- Tipsters are more likely to report incidents anonymously
- Allows screenshots or photo/video evidence with submission
- Administrators can communicate anonymously with tipsters via STOPit Messenger
- Creates an "upstander" versus bystander school culture



Step 1: Report an Incident

Tipster reports an incident using 1 of 4 methods (mobile app, website, telephone hotline, or walk-in)



Step 2: Monitor & Notify

Certified agents review, monitor, and escalate the tip (as needed)



Step 3: Manage & Resolve

School officials are alerted via text, email and call (as needed) to review and act upon the incident

STOPit Benefits Everyone

- + Empowers individuals to report behaviors anonymously and in real time
- + Allows administrators to address a situation before it spirals out of control
- + Proven to reduce incidents in the first year of use, saving up to 63% of time monitoring and managing reported incidents



Additional Information

Program Roll-out, Launch and Sustainability: Administrators are often concerned about program roll-out and launch complexities. The STOPit Team provides a Virtual Onboarding Experience with step-by-step training videos. Once administrators and staff complete training, students may be trained individually, assembly-style, or in the classroom via Launch video with support resources. Parent resources are provided including take-home materials and digital assets. You will have a dedicated STOPit Account Manager to support you throughout the partnership and work with your administrators to renew the program each year.

Program Services: As a member of RESIG, your district is able to adopt the STOPit Anonymous Reporting System and Safety Program at NO COST.

- ✓ **STOPit Mobile App, Web App, and 24/7 Hotline:** Easy-to-use apps give tipsters the power to report issues anonymously to school officials directly from their phones or web devices. Includes built-in messenger for real-time dialogue between administrators and tipsters to make follow up easy. Tipsters may also call into the 24/7 Hotline.
- ✓ **STOPit Incident Monitoring Service (IMS):** Certified Incident Response Agents monitor incidents and answer telephone hotline calls 24/7/365, ensuring that all identified emergencies are escalated to school officials and, as needed, first responders.
- ✓ **STOPit Admin:** Our comprehensive incident management system saves your administrators' time by helping them manage all incident reports in one system. Built-in analytics provide actionable data on trends and help identify areas for improvement.
- ✓ **STOPit SEL & Wellness Training Center:** Service provided include: professionally developed lessons on Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) available directly within STOPit Admin. Help administrators manage issues effectively and give them helpful resources to share with students.
- ✓ **Integration with Crisis Text Line:** Tipsters can connect with a Crisis Counselor from Crisis Text Line at any time via the STOPit Mobile or Web App.



Ready to make your schools safer with less admin time? Contact a STOPit representative for a 20 minute demo.

Visit: stopitsolutions.com/resig

Email: insurance@stopitsolutions.com

Call: 855-990-0932