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# Safety begins at the workplace, too

**W**e all need to prioritize at work. And while we're taking care of our day-to-day tasks, we can't forget safety.

The American Red Cross offers these safety tips:

- Don't leave keys lying around.
- Notify security if you notice suspicious people or vehicles.
- Use caution in stairwells, isolated or poorly lighted restrooms and elevators.
- Stand near the controls in elevators, locate the emergency button and never enter if someone appears suspicious.

## Career Roundup

By Maggie Reed

- Know your co-workers, and look out for each other.
- Keep your purse, wallet and other valuables with you or locked in a drawer or closet.
- Be discreet, and don't advertise your social life or vacation plans.
- If you work odd hours, walk with a group or ask another employee or security personnel to escort you to your car.

## Workplace hazards

Work spaces often are full of dangers, whether in a home or a remote office.

The No. 1 threat? Equipment cords and wires.

In the United States, cords and wires cause 15 percent of all accidental, job-related deaths and are second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities, according to the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

To help workers avoid workplace perils - and workers compensation claims -

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# Roundup: Preparation is key to avoiding, surviving accidents

## From page F1

www.cableorganizer.com offers these tips:

- Cable control on the cheap - Computer cables can be easily shielded with a split wire loom, a flexible and durable polyethylene corrugated tube with a spilt down the side where you enter your multicable bundle. It only costs a few dollars.

- Achieve liftoff - All small devices can be kept off the floor and put out of harm's way with products that loop, tie and hang cable clutter off the floor.

- Wire fire can be dire - Do not put many outlets in one place. The glut, along with long periods of

use, can equal fire. Keep a fire extinguisher handy at all times.

- Get attached - Make sure bookshelves and cabinets, especially those that are top-heavy, are secured to the wall with an appropriate fastener so they don't fall over.

- Take the edge off - Wrap anything with a sharp edge, such as broken or cracked glass and brittle plastic casing, in corrugated cardboard and secure with a heavy-duty tape to protect others from accidental lacerations.

## Emergencies

If a fire or other emergency situation arose in your workplace,

would you know what to do?

"We're calling everyone to action to start thinking about fire safety - not just at home but at your place of work or any building you're in," said John Drengenberg, global consumer affairs manager at Underwriters Laboratories Inc. "Preparation now could lead to an effective escape in the event of a fire."

Some common-sense tips:

- Be prepared - Know the location of fire alarms and the nearest exits. Know where you physically are because an escape in the dark might be necessary.

- Don't panic - Call 911; don't assume someone else has. Don't

take the elevator. Leave quickly and close doors behind you to help contain smoke and fire.

- Low down - Stay low to the ground to avoid rising heat and smoke.

- Get the feeling - Feel doors before opening them, starting from the bottom and moving to the top. If a door is hot, don't open it. If it's cool, open it slowly and be prepared to close it quickly if fire and flames rush in.

- Escape clause - If you escape but co-workers remain inside, let firefighters know immediately. Don't go back in and attempt a rescue. Once outside, move away from burning buildings.

- If you stay - Remain calm and close as many doors as possible between you and the fire. Seal all cracks with whatever you have available, such as jackets or towels. Wait at a window, if possible. Try to open it for air, but do not break it as you might need to close it if smoke rushes in. Remember, rescue could take hours, so be patient.

- Employer's role - Conduct regular, mandatory fire drills at least twice a year. Post evacuation routes throughout the building. Fire exits and doorways should never be blocked or locked.

*Maggie Reed is a columnist with Copley News Service.*