

## PPS CUSTODIAL SERVICES SAFETY PROCEDURES

Every safety and health program has a single purpose - - to keep people on the job by reducing accidents, injuries, and illness. However, safety programs are more than injury-prevention programs. They are designed to improve the life of all employees both at home and at work.

Custodial Services provide the cleaning and upkeep for the buildings on campus. Custodians may encounter a variety of safety hazards. This section will help custodians understand the College's expectations for this job.

### CONDUCT

Make a habit to work safely every day. Practical jokes, horseplay, fighting, or any other activity jeopardizing your safety or any other employee's safety will not be tolerated. Be sure to acquire all of the proper safety gear for the job. Safety devices and guards installed on machines and equipment are there to protect employees and must not be removed or made inoperative.

### SMOKING

State of Colorado rules prohibit smoking in all buildings at Fort Lewis College. Smoking is prohibited within a 50 foot radius from buildings. Safe disposal of matches, cigarettes, cigars, or other burning substances is required. These materials must be extinguished and placed in proper receptacles.

### INTOXICANTS

The use of intoxicating beverages and/or drugs during working hours is strictly prohibited and is cause for disciplinary action including possible termination. Any employee under the influence of intoxicating beverages and/or drugs will not be allowed on the job. Physician-prescribed medication will be allowed provided it does not impair job performance. The supervisor must be notified of any new prescription or change in prescription, which affects the employee's ability to perform their assigned job duties.

### CLOTHING

Physical Plant employees are required to dress appropriately for their particular job and use the proper safety equipment as required. When working near equipment or with chemicals, wear full length pants, shirts that reach the waist, and closed-toe shoes. Loose clothing, a dangling watch, key chains, or any other unnecessary items are prohibited when working with, on, or around any machinery with moving parts. Many positions are required to work in extreme, inclement weather. Proper attire is required to avoid adverse exposure to high and low temperatures, rain, snow, high winds, etc.

### FIRE PROTECTION

In case of fire, call 911 (9-911 from a campus phone). Be sure to know the locations of fire protection equipment in and around the building you are working in. Be aware of building exits, fire pull stations, and fire extinguisher locations. Fire protection equipment should not be moved or removed from the designated storage area except when in use. If a fire extinguisher is missing or has been discharged for any reason, report it to the PPS Service Center immediately.

### HAZARDS AND ACCIDENT REPORTING

Employees are responsible for notifying a supervisor immediately of any unsafe condition and/or work practice. Employees should stop any unsafe work practice without fear of reprisal from another employee or contractor. If you are qualified to correct an unsafe hazard, do so immediately and notify your supervisor of your actions. Immediately report all near miss incidents and accidents to your supervisor as soon as you can, and always before the end of the work shift.

### PROCEDURAL SAFETY

- All employees who drive or ride in FLC vehicles or are on college business and drive their own vehicles must wear seat belts. This is a requirement of both the college and the State of Colorado.

- Lockout/Tagout procedures are used to isolate hazardous energy sources from electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic or any machinery or equipment that has the potential to inadvertently start, operate, shift, fall or otherwise move while being serviced. Qualified equipment must be locked out to protect against accidental or inadvertent operation, when operation could cause injury to personnel. Locks are to be applied and removed only by the authorized employee who is performing the servicing or maintenance. Know how to recognize the lockout devices and lockout warning tags. Never attempt to operate locked-out equipment.
- Inspect ladders and make sure it is stable on level, firm footing before using. Never stand on the top rung and move the ladder rather than over extend your reach. Follow ladder safety procedures as presented in the PureSafety course.
- All employees should be familiar with Material Safety Data Sheets. MSDS provide specific safety information pertaining to various products and their use. A master file is maintained in the PPS Custodial Shop but if an employee needs an MSDS sheet, he/she should contact their supervisor.
- Before lifting any object, the size, weight, and shape of the object needs to be considered to determine if it can be safely handled. Lifting is subject to the following:
  - Individual's capacity
  - Type of load
  - Frequency with which the load is lifted
  - Position in which the load must be lifted.

The maximum lifting capability of each person is stated in his or her job description. Never attempt to lift more than you can carry comfortably. Get help when there is any question as to whether the object can be safely lifted by one person. Whenever possible, use the following steps to assure a proper lifting stance:

- Secure good footing with feet parted, one alongside, one behind the object.
- Bend your knees and not your back if the object is on the floor.
- Take a firm grip with both hands.
- Tuck elbows and arms in
- Keep back straight – nearly vertical
- Tuck chin in so neck and head keep a straight line
- Keep body weight directly over feet.

Lift with your leg muscles – slowly, smoothly and without jerking. When setting down a load follow the seven steps in the opposite order, remembering to use your leg muscles rather than those of the back. Avoid twisting while lifting, handling, or carrying a load. When carrying a load, turn yourself by pointing the forward foot in the direction of the eventual movement. When raising an object to or above shoulder height, bend knees and shift hand position so that the object can be boosted above shoulder level.

### CUSTODIAL CLOSETS

We all need to practice good housekeeping. Thus, time to clean up the work area should be incorporated into the work schedule. Custodial closets must have the following safety items and meet the safety guidelines below:

- All chemicals must be stored at eye level or below.
- All containers must be properly labeled in original manufacturer's container.
- Only approved materials and supplies stocked by custodial supervisor
- Wet mops must be hung up to dry
- Mop buckets must be empty – no standing water or chemicals
- Equipment must be cleaned out and empty
- Food cannot be stored near chemicals
- Bloodborne pathogen kit to include at minimum:
  - Gloves
  - Respirator mask
  - Apron
  - Shoe covers
  - Absorbent material
  - Sharps container

- Germicidal detergent
- Disposable towels
- Plastic trash bag

### CUSTODIAL CARTS

Custodial carts must have the following safety items:

- Safety goggles or glasses
- Rubber gloves
- "Wet Floor" signs
- A chemical bag cutter
- Hand sanitizer
- Earplugs

### WET MOP AND MOP BUCKET WITH WRINGER

- A wet area can be a potentially hazardous situation. The hazard can be greatly reduced by exercising simple precautions and proper work methods. Slipping is a major cause of knee and back injuries. Wear shoes with non-slip soles when working on wet floors
- Protect others from slipping by marking the area to be mopped with appropriate "Wet Area" warning signs before beginning work
- Have a rubber, non-slip handgrip on the bucket wringer handle. This makes it easier to wring the mop and reduces the risk of injuries to hands, wrists, or backs caused by a hand slipping off the handle
- Leave the mop bucket in a place where it can be seen but out of the way of traffic. Don't leave it in a hidden or potentially dangerous place (e.g., behind furniture or doors, around corners, or at the top or bottom of stairs)
- When rinsing a mop in the mop bucket, avoid splashing dirty water or chemical solutions on clothes, hands or in eyes. It is preferred that goggles, safety glasses with side shields or full face shields be worn.
- Mopping puts excess stress on the back, especially if done improperly. To avoid this type of stress, use a lightweight mop, if possible, and hold the handle in such a way that the back is fairly straight and free from strain. Take an extra step to avoid overreaching.
- Rinse the mop and bucket thoroughly after mopping any type of chemical spill. This should be done only after the chemical has been identified. If the chemical cannot be identified, contact your supervisor and the Director of Environmental Health and Safety.

### PUSH BROOM OR DUST MOP

Generally treat push brooms and dust mops with the same care as wet mops. The following added precautions should be noted:

- When cleaning the broom head, wear a particle mask to avoid breathing in dust.
- Do not lean handles against the wall. They can fall and hit someone walking by.
- If you have sensitive skin, wear gloves.

### MACHINERY

Because of the many moving parts and constant current of electricity associated with machinery, it is important to exercise extra care.

- Operate only the machinery that you have been trained to use properly. When servicing or inspecting any machinery, be sure it is unplugged
- Do not operate any machine if it is not functioning properly. Make sure the machine is in good working order before starting use. Discontinue use on a machine if anything is unusual about its performance.
- Don't leave machinery plugged in and unattended! Unplug the machine when not in use and never leave it unattended in a place where anyone who is not authorized to use it might have access to it. Before using any electrical machine, inspect the cord for bare or frayed wires and

the plug for bent or broken prongs. Ask your supervisor to get defects repaired before using the machine

- Keep all safety guards in place and operating properly at all times. If missing or partially detached, they will hinder your work process and could pose a threat of injury. They are there for your protection
- Keep track of where the cord is and avoid using machinery in a location where the cord presents a tripping hazard. Mark any cord that crosses a walking path. When using extension cords, keep enough slack so that the cord remains on the ground to avoid getting pulled from the outlet. This can cause bent or broken prongs or can pull the wire or insulation from the plug, which may present a shock hazard. For the same reasons, unwind the cord before plugging it in and unplug the cord before winding it back up
- When checking batteries or wiring, make sure the power is turned off.

### BUFFER

The buffer is more specialized than most custodial machines or tools. Care must be exercised when operating this piece of equipment. Buffers are very powerful machines. When they are operating smoothly, it is easy to forget how destructive they can be if they get out of control.

- Before plugging in and using the buffer, make sure that the drive plate and buffing pad are securely attached.
- Unplug the buffer before setting the handle, drive plate, or pad. Always return the buffer to an upright position before plugging it in
- Never leave the buffer with the handle in a horizontal position. This presents a tripping hazard. Store the buffer in an upright position, as well, with the drive plate and buffing pad removed
- Control the buffer using both hands. This will help to avoid damage to walls, furniture, and personnel
- Keep the buffing pads clean. This makes the buffer easier to control, and prevents sharp objects from sticking to the pad thus damaging the floor. Be careful when operating under desks, chairs, etc., where the buffer can get caught.
- When stripping a floor, walk on the area that has already been scrubbed, if possible. The floor can be very slippery. Non slip shoes should be worn when using stripping solutions

### HIGH-SPEED BURNISHERS

- High-speed buffers are easier to control but are more powerful. The increase in power is accompanied with an increase in danger. It is important to keep an eye out for uneven floor tiles or loose floor boards. If the buffer catches an edge of a floor tile or floor board, it can pull up the tiles or tear the boards from the walls

### WET OR DRY VACUUMS

Even a vacuum can be a safety hazard if not handled properly.

- Check the vacuum before each use. It should be in proper working condition before using the vacuum.
- Know and understand the machine. Follow proper training techniques and operating needs.
- Empty vacuum bags and containers at the end of each shift.
- Replace vacuums onto the correct holders when done.

### CLEANING SOLUTIONS

The cleaning solutions used in custodial work can contain chemicals that are harmful if splashed in eyes, on skin, or inhaled. When various chemicals are left out carelessly or improperly sealed they pose a threat to employees. Chemicals should be stored at or below eye level; it is important to know what the chemicals are and what to do in case of an accident involving them.

- Know the nature of the chemicals being used. If you have any questions, talk to your supervisor or refer to the **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)** for chemicals. If chemicals should get splashed in your eyes or on your skin, it is important to know what to do to neutralize the chemical and prevent further harm

- Read and know and know what the warnings on chemical containers stand for and follow the precautions associated with each warning
- Wear protective gear when working with chemicals. Goggles and gloves are the best way to prevent a chemical spill or splash from causing serious bodily harm
- Store all chemicals in an approved, clearly labeled, properly sealed container at or below eye level.
- Do not dispose of a chemical unless you know the procedure required to properly dispose of it and its container. Triple rinse all chemical containers before disposing of them.
- If a chemical is found in the area and the contents are uncertain, leave it alone. If it has spilled or is unsealed, do not clean it up, do not put a lid on it, and do not touch it until it has been accurately identified. If you have questions, leave the area immediately and contact your supervisor
- If you smell anything suspicious, clear the area, and report the potential hazard to your supervisor immediately. Do not try to figure out what the smell is or what is emitting the odor

#### TRASH REMOVAL

Unfortunately, not everyone complies with proper disposal procedures. Never assume that these procedures have been followed.

- If the trash looks suspicious, do not reach into a trash container to get something out. Empty the whole liner into the trash cart. Glass disposed of improperly can cause lacerations, so we do not place glass in trash containers. Chemicals disposed of improperly can get in an open wound or cause skin or eye irritation, or a more serious injury
- Be careful at all times climbing steps to trash bins or working around the bin. Rain, snow, and ice make the area, including the steps, very slippery
- Secure the door latch on the trash bin when finished. Report any dumpsters in need of repair to your supervisor
- Put bags of trash in the proper areas.
- If anything is found in the trash that may not be safe to dispose of in the bin, do not empty the trash!!!
- If you see anything suspicious or hazardous in the trash bins, report it immediately to the PPS Service Center, your supervisor or the Fort Lewis College Police Department
- The majority of back injuries sustained by the department are due to improper lifting during trash removal. Large trash bags are not to be too stuffed until completely full. Limit bag contents to no more than 35 gallons (half-full on a 70 gallon bag). The cost of numerous trash bags is much less than the price of a back injury

#### CLEANING UP BROKEN GLASS OR SHARP OBJECTS

- Report any broken object, whether broken by you or not, to your supervisor before cleaning it up. Wear gloves to pick up the large pieces first. Put them in a puncture-proof container for disposal, not in a trash liner. Then, vacuum the surface to get the remaining pieces

#### MOPPING AND CLEANING STAIRS

Exercise extreme caution when working on stairs. Danger increases as you get farther from the bottom of the stairs.

- Be especially careful when mopping stairs. The slick surface, coupled with the eminent danger of the stairway, make it even more important to use extreme caution
- Stand on the stair or two down from the stair on which work is being performed. This puts less strain on the back and your force will be toward the top of the stairs, rather than the bottom
- Mark the top and bottom of the stairway with a "wet floor" sign to alert others of the danger.

#### ELEVATORS

- When getting on or off an elevator with a mop bucket or other wheeled equipment, the wheels could get caught in the crack between the floor and elevator. Should this happen, be careful not to trip over the mop buck or injure your back trying to get the wheels removed. On some older

elevators, the floor of the elevator is not level with the floor in the hallway. Take care not to trip when exiting the elevator

TAKE A MOMENT

- When entering a work area, take a minute and look around to ensure there are not unsafe conditions or activities taking place that could impact your work.
- When performing infrequent work tasks, take time to review the task with your supervisor, especially if there is any additional hazards associated with the infrequent work.