Most supervisors and safety managers are well aware of hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS), an occupational health condition caused by significant exposure to vibration from tools such as pneumatic drills or chainsaws. However, the term vibration-induced white feet is probably new to you.

A researcher who specializes in occupational vibration is using a $110,000 grant from the Ontario Ministry of Labour to conduct a study on what can be done to reduce the negative health effects of vibrations travelling through the feet of miners in northern Ontario.

Tammy Eger, research chair in occupational health and safety at the Centre for Research in Occupational Safety and Health (CROSH) at Laurentian University in Sudbury, ON, told Safety Smart that miners are exposed to vibrations through their feet while operating haul trucks, and especially when they are working on drilling platforms in mines.

Eger says construction workers are also at risk for vibration-induced white feet, and similar problems have been noted among New Zealand agricultural workers who use all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) for long periods of time. Vibration-induced white feet was first documented by Canadian researcher Dr. A.M.S. Thompson in 2010.

Workers exposed to significant vibration while operating hand-held tools frequently develop nerve damage to their fingers—a condition known as HAVS. Symptoms include numbness and a tingling sensation in the fingertips. With continued hand exposure to intense vibration, workers may develop severe pain when their hands are unprotected in cold temperatures. Their fingertips turn white from lack of blood circulation, hence the term “vibration white finger.”

As symptoms progress, workers may experience permanent numbness in their fingers, along with pain, reduced grip strength and loss of ability to grasp and manipulate objects with their fingers. This condition can easily lead to an inability to continue working.
Vibration-induced white feet is a similar condition to HAVS. Higher-frequency vibration causes blanching of skin on the feet, along with discomfort, tingling and numbness. As this condition worsens, it can negatively affect balance, increasing the possibility of trips or falls, along with causing a loss of sensation in the feet that is necessary to allow people to safely perform work tasks.

“We are looking to develop a combination of materials that will help us to filter out the vibrations that will cause this damage to the feet,” she says.

Eger’s study involves working with manufacturers to develop products that will reduce the negative effects of vibrations travelling through workers’ feet. She is also working towards developing an inexpensive means of measuring a worker’s exposure to vibration.

“We are currently testing a combination of mats, boots and insoles. The results are promising. We are also working with a few companies that are developing engineering solutions to reduce vibration emissions. Following the hierarchy of controls, engineering solutions will be the ultimate goal. However, we are confident we can identify a combination of mat, boot and insole that will decrease the level of vibration transmitted from the vibrating floor surface into the feet and lower legs of the worker,” she says.

One engineering solution that has shown promise in reducing vibration exposure among long-haul transport and coach drivers is the Bose Ride System. Bose, well known for its noise-cancelling headphone technology, says the Bose Ride System “continually senses, analyzes and counteracts forces from the road instead of just dampening them.”

**TOP INJURIES**

**Overexertion Leads Liberty Mutual’s Top 10 Non-fatal Injury List**

Overexertion injuries involving outside sources—such as lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, carrying or throwing—led the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety’s 2014 top 10 list of disabling workplace injuries causing employees to miss at least six days of work.

The 2014 index provides statistics for injuries which actually occurred in 2012, the most recent year for which statistics are available.

Overexertion injuries, accounting for 25.3 percent of disabling injuries, cost US businesses $15.1 billion that year. Falls on the same level were in the number two spot, accounting for 15.4 percent of disabling injuries and carrying a direct cost of $9.19 billion.

Here are the remaining leading causes of disabling workplace injuries in Liberty Mutual’s Top 10 list:

1. **Ergonomic injuries** involving outside sources—such as lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, carrying or throwing—led the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety’s 2014 top 10 list of disabling workplace injuries causing employees to miss at least six days of work.

2. **Struck by object or equipment**, accounting for 8.9 percent of disabling workplace injuries, at a $5.3 billion direct cost to businesses.

3. **Falls to a lower level**, accounting for 8.6 percent of disabling workplace injuries at a $5.12 billion cost to businesses.

4. **Other exertions or bodily reactions** (resulting from bending, crawling, reaching, twisting, climbing, stepping, kneeling, sitting, standing, or walking), accounting for 7.2 percent of disabling injuries at a direct cost of $4.27 billion.

5. **Roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicles**, accounting for 5.3 percent of disabling injuries at a $3.18 billion direct cost to businesses.

6. **Slip or trip incidents without falls**, accounting for 3.6 percent of disabling injuries at a $2.17 billion cost to businesses.

7. **Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects incidents**, accounting for 3.5 percent of disabling injuries at a $2.1 billion cost to businesses.

8. **Repetitive motions involving micro-tasks**, accounting for 3.1 percent of disabling injuries at a $1.84 billion cost to businesses.

9. **Struck against object or equipment incidents**, accounting for 2.9 percent of disabling injuries, at a $1.76 billion cost to businesses.

10. **Struck against object or equipment incidents**, accounting for 2.9 percent of disabling injuries, at a $1.76 billion cost to businesses.
### Office Ergonomics Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>(If no, suggested actions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chair</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Chair</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the height, seat and back of your chair be adjusted?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain a properly functioning chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your feet fully supported by the floor when you are seated?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower the chair, Add footrest, Readjust for footwear height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you able to sit without feeling pressure from the chair seat on the back of your knees?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adjust seat pan, Add a back support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your chair provide support for your lower back?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adjust chair back, Obtain proper chair, Obtain lumbar roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your armrests allow you to get close to your workstation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adjust armrests, Remove armrests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keyboard and Mouse</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(If no, suggested actions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your keyboard, mouse and work surface at your elbow height?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raise or lower workstation, Raise or lower keyboard, Raise or lower chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are frequently used objects within easy reach?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rearrange workstation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When using your keyboard and mouse, are your wrists straight and your upper arms relaxed by your side?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recheck chair, raise or lower as needed, Check posture, Check keyboard and mouse height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your mouse at the same level and as close as possible to your keyboard?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Move mouse closer to keyboard, Obtain larger keyboard tray if necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you alternate the hand used for controlling your mouse?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Switch hands and adjust buttons in Control Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Surface</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(If no, suggested actions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your monitor positioned directly in front of you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reposition monitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your monitor positioned at least an arm’s length away?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reposition monitor, Obtain flat screen or deeper work surface if there is not enough space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your monitor height slightly below eye level?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add or remove monitor stand, Adjust monitor height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your monitor and work surface free from glare?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windows at side of monitor, Adjust overhead lighting, Cover windows, Tilt screen downward, Obtain anti-glare screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a desk lamp for reading or writing documents?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain desk lamp, Place on left if right-handed – place on right if left-handed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breaks</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(If no, suggested actions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you take stretch breaks every 30 minutes?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Set reminders to take breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you take regular eye breaks from looking at your monitor?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Refocus on a picture on wall every few minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessories</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(If no, suggested actions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your document ramp positioned directly in front of you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain a different document ramp, Adjust workstation set-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you using a headset or speakerphone if you are writing or keying while talking on the phone?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain a headset if using the phone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: WorkSafeNB.ca)
REGION 3
Iron Foundry Issued $152,912 in Proposed Fines after ignoring earlier violations cited by OSHA. The company has been investigated, cited and fined by OSHA eight times since 2011. OSHA’s three most-recent inspections in summer 2014 resulted in more than two dozen violations being cited for a variety of dangerous conditions, including fall, machine guarding and siling hazards. OSHA says fall protection was not provided to workers performing maintenance on an abrasive blasting machine and platforms were not properly guarded. The company also failed to mark chain slings used for lifting heavy loads to identify size, grade, capacity and reach. Two willful violations were cited for those hazards. Twelve repeat violations were cited for deficiencies in the foundry’s lockout/tagout and respiratory protection programs, as well as electrical, fall, and machine guarding hazards. Eight serious violations were cited for unguarded machinery, forklift hazards, struck-by hazards, electrical hazards and failure to maintain fire extinguishers. Five additional other-than-serious violations were also cited. Those violations do not carry monetary penalties. [Domestic Casting, Shippensburg, PA, Jan. 5, 2015].

REGION 4
Construction Company Cited in Fort Bragg Trench Collapse that killed 22-year-old worker. Clyde Nettles Jr. and a co-worker were in an unprotected trench reconnecting drainpipes at an ammunition supply point in July 2014 when the excavation suddenly collapsed. The other worker escaped uninjured, but Nettles did not survive. OSHA investigated the fatality and cited a construction company for two willful and two serious violations. The willful violations include failure to provide cave-in protection to employees working in a trench with a depth of five or more feet, and not providing a safe means of entering and exiting the trench. OSHA requires that for every 25 feet of trench length, a safe exit must be installed—yet in this case, three trenches exceeded 60 feet in length, but lacked exits. The serious violations include failure to provide hardhats to employees inside trenches and failure to train workers to identify and avoid hazardous working conditions. OSHA is proposing penalties totaling $123,200. [Tekton Construction Co., Fort Bragg, NC, Jan. 7, 2015].

OSHA Cites Chemical Company After Worker Dies from hazardous exposure. OSHA investigated after hazardous chemical vapors released from an over-pressurized reactor caused a worker to die from respiratory system burns. A second worker who was also exposed to the vapors survived. OSHA cited repeat violations for failure to ensure that the reactor system alarm provided early warning for worker evacuation; failure to train workers on the hazards of permit-required confined spaces; and failure to ensure that equipment used for manufacturing had an adequate pressure-relief design. The company was cited for similar violations in 2012. Serious violations were also cited for failure to ensure that floor openings and pits were guarded; failure to establish and implement written changes to the chemical manufacturing process; failure to identify previous workplace incidents that had the potential for catastrophic results; failure to provide medical examinations for workers required to use respirators; and failure to conduct fit tests for respirators. Proposed penalties for these violations total $87,780. [MFG Chemical Inc., Dalton, GA].

Automotive Parts Supplier Cited for exposing workers to amputation, electrical and struck-by hazards. OSHA is proposing $102,000 in penalties against Saehaesung Alabama Inc. after conducting two separate inspections in company plants in Andalusia, AL and LaFayette, AL. OSHA cited three repeat violations. The Andalusia plant was cited for failure to develop specific procedures to protect workers from moving machine parts during service or maintenance work. The Andalusia and LaFayette facilities were also cited for exposing workers to amputation hazards by failing to provide required guards on welding machines. Both plants were cited for three serious violations for storing material on steel racks which had damaged support columns and lacked floor anchors. Those hazards exposed workers to struck-by hazards. The LaFayette plant was also cited for exposing workers to electric shock hazards by not protecting them from damaged wiring while operating a press welding machine. Four other violations were also cited for a damaged electrical cord, breaker panel and emergency stop switch, and for failure to train workers who worked with hazardous chemicals. [Saehaesung Alabama Inc., Andalusia, AL and LaFayette, AL, Jan. 5, 2015].

OSHA Cites Company After Worker Falls Into Acid-Filled Tank. OSHA conducted an investigation after a maintenance worker slipped and fell backwards into a tank filled with highly corrosive phosphoric and sulfuric acid. The worker survived, but suffered severe burns to his face and internal organs. OSHA cited one willful violation for exposing workers to falls from walkways that lacked railings. Two repeat violations were also cited for failure to ensure that machinery would not start up while workers performed machine maintenance and service, and failure to ensure that workers were trained on how to prevent accidental startup of machinery. Five serious violations include failure to provide workers with equipment to prevent accidental machine startup; failure to ensure workers followed procedures to prevent accidental machine startup; failure to monitor air quality inside chemical tanks that workers entered; failure to train workers on the hazards of confined spaces; and failure to conduct periodic inspections of worker procedures to prevent accidental machine startup. OSHA is proposing $177,500 in total penalties. [WWK Erbsloeh North America Inc., doing business as WWK, Pell City, AL, Jan. 27, 2015].

REGION 5
Dangerous Lead and Copper Dust Exposures during brass finishing and grinding operations result in willful and serious violations against Illinois company. OSHA cited four willful and 26 serious safety violations for not implementing engineering controls; failure to maintain areas free of lead dust and dust accumulation; and failure to monitor employee exposures. OSHA says the company failed to protect workers from known dangers associated with lead exposure and did not implement basic safety precautions, including PPE, proper ventilation, housekeeping, hygiene and training. Workers were being exposed to copper and lead dust in excess of levels allowed over an eight-hour period. The company has been placed in OSHA’s Severe Violator Enforcement Program and issued proposed penalties totaling $171,600. Other violations found during the inspection relate to a lack of safe practices regarding machine guarding, electrical safety and forklift operation. [Hagerty Brothers Co., Peoria, IL, Jan. 5, 2015].

Liquid Animal Feed Manufacturer Issued Proposed Fines Totaling $266,000 after two workers succumbed to dangerous fumes. A 37-year-old worker at Agridyne’s Pekin, IL, facility climbed into a rail car to clean up corn steep residue and was overcome by dangerous hydrogen sulfide gas. A 29-year-old tank inspector came to his aid and both workers died. OSHA investigated and cited three willful and eight serious safety violations, several of them relating to permit-required confined space regulations. OSHA determined that neither victim was equipped with an emergency retrieval system before entering the rail car. The company also failed to complete a permit-required confined space entry permit; did not use testing and monitoring equipment to evaluate the permit space condition prior to entry; and failed to require employees to use rescue and emergency equipment. Serious violations include failure to designate trained rescue employees and use a retrieval system attached to the worker to aid in rescue; train workers and place warning signs about hazards that may be encountered in confined spaces; and ensure that rail cars had been ventilated prior to entry. [Agridyne LLC, Springfield, IL, Jan. 7, 2015].

REGION 6
Metal Fuel-Tank Fabricator Cited for exposing workers to falls and unguarded machinery. OSHA cited 25 serious safety and health violations in a July 2014 inspection. Hazards included failure to provide safeguards for air compressor pulleys, belts, grinders and plate rollers; and fall hazards, including an open loft area without a gate or chain, failure to prevent falls and a missing stair rail leading to a cement mixer. Other serious hazards include unsafe storage of flammable liquids; electrical hazards and using forklifts that required repairs. OSHA is proposing fines totaling $51,600. [Transition of Superior Systems, Merkel, TX, Jan. 8, 2015].
Eliminate the Pain of Contact Stress

Jennifer leaned back from her desk, rubbing at the spot where her arm rested against the hard edge. That spot hurt and her fingers had gone numb. As a matter of fact, this had been happening for months, getting worse as time went on.

Jennifer suffers from something called “contact stress.” Contact stress is a kind of musculoskeletal disorder, or MSD, which includes repetitive motion injuries, eye strain, and carpal tunnel syndrome. Ergonomics—the science of equipment design intended to maximize worker productivity by reducing fatigue and discomfort—plays a key role in preventing these types of work-related injuries.

In this Safety Talk, you’ll learn what contact stress is, what causes it, and how you can relieve it by using ergonomics.

WHAT CAN GO WRONG

Contact stress occurs when a hard surface, like the edge of a desk, presses against soft tissue, including fingers, forearms, palms, thighs, and feet. This localized pressure can inhibit blood flow, nerve function, or movement of tendons and muscles. Jennifer’s contact stress resulted from leaning against the edge of her desk.

Other actions that can cause contact stress are:
- Continuous leg contact with the edge of a chair
- Working on your knees
- Extensive use of wire cutters
- Hoisting heavy objects with ropes
- Prolonged use of a computer keyboard and mouse

Actually, any job that requires your body to be in contact with a sharp or hard object for a long period of time, or repetitively, can cause contact stress. Symptoms to watch out for include discomfort that leads to numbness or tingling in your extremities, such as your hands, legs, or feet.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

A visit from an ergonomist helped resolve Jennifer’s contact stress. An ergonomist designs tools, equipment, and furniture that are easy to use, comfortable, safe, and efficient. In this case, the ergonomist created a workstation just for Jennifer that relieved her arm pain. This revamp of her desk and chair minimized her discomfort and maximized her efficiency and work output.

If you don’t have access to an ergonomist, here are a few things you can do to quickly reduce or eliminate contact stress:
- **Take a break:** Stand up every 20 minutes or so to reduce stress on your body and take a walk once an hour.
- **Support your wrists:** Use a palm support in front of your keyboard to raise your forearms off the edge of your desk.
- **Make it bigger:** Increase the size and length of a tool handle. Adding a soft handle can help too.
- **Protect yourself:** Equipment such as kneepads and gloves help reduce contact stress by keeping something between you and the work surface.
- **Revamp your workstation:** Eliminate stress points by rearranging your work area.

FINAL WORD

To save yourself discomfort, pay close attention to the contact between your body and the objects you interact with. That little bit of discomfort you put up with today can turn into a lot of pain, and possibly permanent damage, later. By making a few small changes, contact stress can be a thing of the past in your workplace.

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**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. Contact stress is a kind of musculoskeletal disorder.
   - [ ] True  [ ] False

2. Contact stress happens when a hard surface presses against soft tissue, restricting blood flow, nerve function, or movement of tendons or muscles.
   - [ ] True  [ ] False

3. Actions that can cause contact stress include:
   - a. pressing an arm against the edge of a desk,
   - b. taking a break every 20 minutes,
   - c. using a wrist support,
   - d. wearing the correct type of gloves.

4. Avoid contact stress by:
   - a. raising a heavy box above your head,
   - b. sitting on the edge of your chair,
   - c. rearranging your work area,
   - d. working on your knees.

**What Would You Do?**

Thomas lays carpet for a living and he’s been having a lot of knee and back pain. What can he do to help relieve the contact stress he has?

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Learn the Steps to Stepladder Safety

Stepladders are found everywhere. We use them at work and at home regularly and without a second thought. But accidents can, and do, happen as much with stepladders as with other types of ladders and scaffolding. In fact, stepladder accidents account for 20 percent of all ladder accidents!
In this Safety Talk, you’ll learn common causes of stepladder accidents and how you can prevent them.

WHAT CAN GO WRONG

The wireless Internet service was down—again. Jack sighed and got up to restart the device. He set up the stepladder near the bookshelf where the modem was located and climbed up. Just as he got the cable unplugged, he fumbled the cord and it fell. But, instead of getting down and picking it up, he reached over for it.

Before Jack knew it, he tipped the ladder over and fell the short distance to the ground. Like many people, Jack experienced the consequences of one of the most common mistakes involving a stepladder: over-reaching. This happens when you reach too far to one side and, unintentionally, cause the ladder to tip over sideways. Other causes of stepladder accidents include:

- Unlocked ladder spreaders
- Standing on the top step
- Placing a ladder on boxes or other unstable surfaces
- Trying to move (bunny hop) a ladder while standing on it

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Here are some safety tips to follow when using a stepladder:

- **Set it up properly:** Make sure that you set your stepladder on an even, solid surface. Ensure that its spreaders are locked and that there is no obvious damage to the ladder’s structure.

- **Use it right:** Don’t use your stepladder in a folded or leaning position and never stand on the top two steps. Also, using a stepladder as an extension or as a ramp can lead to injury incidents.

- **Watch out for others:** Clear the space around the base of the ladder and block off the immediate area so you and others stay safe.

- **Climb safely:** Wear proper footwear with good tread, carry your tools in a tool belt or move them with a rope and basket, and keep your body centered in the middle of the ladder when climbing.

- **Don’t get shocked:** When conducting electrical work, use a non-conductive ladder. Take care to avoid contact with electrical wires when moving or setting up a ladder.

FINAL WORD

Stepladders are easy to set up and, when used correctly, help you work more safely. Keep a small stepladder handy at all times so you aren’t tempted to use a makeshift device, such as a desk, chair, or work bench, instead. Just remember the tips mentioned in this Safety Talk and don’t take shortcuts.

Meeting material to go: Safety meeting materials such as presentation tips, PowerPoint presentations, quiz answers and more are downloadable at: www.SafetySmart.com

FOCUS ON: TICKS AND MOSQUITOES

Tick and Mosquito Season Arriving Soon

As winter recedes and spring approaches, ticks and mosquitoes will soon become active, meaning that people who work outdoors need to protect themselves against some of the diseases and viruses carried by these insects and arachnids.

Workers in many parts of North America are at risk for acquiring West Nile Virus through mosquito bites, or Lyme disease through tick bites.

Here are some facts about West Nile Virus and Lyme disease that you should share with your outdoor workers:

**Lyme disease**

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of a tick—a tiny bug about the size of a sesame seed. Ticks are found in tall grass and wooded areas and can easily attach themselves to anyone walking by.

Ticks will burrow part way into a person’s skin and then begin to draw blood. Tick bites spread several diseases, including Lyme disease.

Within a few days of being bitten by a tick, many people will develop a bull’s-eye rash and flu-like symptoms including fatigue, fever and chills, although some people may experience no symptoms. Weeks or months later, some people will develop swelling and pain in their large joints and in serious cases, inflammation of the brain, or inflammation of the heart and its surrounding tissues.

Although rare, fatalities have occurred in severe cases of Lyme disease. If people suspect they have been bitten by a tick, they should seek medical attention without delay. A doctor will prescribe antibiotics and recovery should occur quickly if treatment is sought soon after a bite.

**West Nile Virus**

West Nile Virus is an infection found in birds. Mosquitoes that feed on the blood of an infected bird and then feed on a human can spread this virus.

Although many people will develop no symptoms, about 20 percent of people who acquire the virus will develop symptoms such as fatigue, muscle weakness and memory problems.

About one percent of people acquiring West Nile Virus will become seriously ill and end up in hospital. Serious symptoms include swelling of the brain and the lining of the brain, or polio-like paralysis. In rare cases, death can occur.

There is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment for West Nile Virus. Pain medication can be taken to reduce fever and discomfort. In severe cases, patients may be hospitalized and receive intravenous fluids and pain medication.

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**How Workers Can Reduce Exposure Risks for West Nile Virus and Lyme disease:**

- Outdoor workers should apply an insect repellent containing DEET to clothing and any exposed skin before venturing outside.
- If possible, stay out of bushy areas.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants and socks, preferably in a light color. Dark-colored clothing attracts mosquitoes.
- Pants should be tucked into socks, or workers can wear high boots and apply tape to seal the gap between pants and boots.
- Inspect your body for ticks immediately after leaving an area where they may be present. Have a shower as soon as possible.
- Check your clothing and gear to ensure that ticks have not been carried indoors.

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**WORLD OF SAFETY**

**Garbage Truck Throws Worker 10 Feet**

There are plenty of hazards associated with operating a garbage truck, but an incident in New Jersey probably isn’t on anyone’s top 10 list of what can go wrong.

A garbage truck driver in Emerson, NJ, was thrown 10 feet after walking to the back of the truck to load the contents of three recycling bins. A gate that opens and closes to accommodate waste material suddenly came loose and struck him.

The worker, who was conscious when police arrived, suffered non-life threatening abdominal, shoulder and leg injuries. OSHA is investigating the cause of the incident.
This photograph illustrates a hazard seen time and time again in the workplace: workers standing under a suspended load. Yes, that’s danger tape in front of the workers, warning people to stay away from the area. Ironically, a crane crew had delivered a safety talk warning against standing under suspended loads only a few hours before this photograph was taken. (Naval Safety Center)

NEWS YOU CAN USE
OSHA Orders Fired Pilot Reinstated

An Ohio helicopter pilot who was fired after refusing to fly a medical transport helicopter because of safety concerns has been ordered reinstated. OSHA also ordered Air Methods Corp. to pay the pilot more than $166,000 in back wages and damages.

The pilot refused to fly a helicopter over mountainous terrain at night, because the aircraft’s emergency locator transmitter was not working properly. OSHA found that Air Methods Corp. violated the Wendell H. Ford Aviation and Reform Act for the 21st Century (AIR 21) when it retaliated against the pilot by firing him for refusing to fly an unsafe aircraft.

“Pilots should never have to choose between the safety of themselves and their passengers, and their job. Whistleblower protections are critical to keeping workplaces safe. Disciplining an employee for following safety procedures is illegal and puts everyone at risk,” says Nick Walters, a regional OSHA administrator based in Chicago, IL.

The worker was placed on administrative leave on July 31, 2013—one day after refusing to fly the helicopter—and was fired on Aug. 5, 2013.

OSHA ordered the company to remove disciplinary information from the pilot’s personnel record. It also must provide whistleblower rights information to all of its employees.

SEVEN STATISTICS
Workstation Ergonomics

Sitting at a workstation for hours at a time isn’t good for a worker’s body—and slouching is even worse. Is it any wonder that workers feel stiff, sore and fatigued at the end of a shift? Here are seven statistics relating to office workstations and musculoskeletal injuries.

1. Extended computer work without periodic breaks can lead to muscular fatigue and discomfort in these 4 parts of the body: the back, arms, shoulders and neck. (Ontario Ministry of Labour)

2. The number 1 source of muscular fatigue and discomfort is poor posture due to the layout of the workstation and the furniture provided. (Ontario Ministry of Labour)

3. When working at a computer keyboard, a worker’s elbows should be bent at an angle of about 90 degrees when the fingers are in the typing position.

4. Two other problems associated with extensive computer operation are eye strain and headaches.

5. Avoid sitting at a workstation for long periods without moving. Get up and stretch and try to move your back, neck and shoulders at least every 10 minutes.

6. In adjusting the height of your desk chair, remember these 2 things: Your thighs should be horizontal and your knees should be at right angles with your feet flat on the floor.

7. The healthy body can only tolerate staying in one position for about 20 minutes. After that time, most workers will experience discomfort. (spinehealth.com)