

SCHOOL Safety Matters

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Monthly Safety Tips

Cold and Flu Season

Soon after the annual return of students and staff to our buildings, the cold and flu season follows. Some ways to avoid catching or spreading these viruses are frequent and thorough washing of hands, covering our mouths with sleeves rather than hands when coughing or sneezing and getting a flu shot; it's not too late. Hand sanitizer should not take the place of hand washing but can be used when soap and water is unavailable. However, this was the product used to start the destructive Woodburn High School fire, so its availability should be carefully controlled. Foam sanitizer is far safer than gel since it cannot be as easily ignited. If staff do become sick, they should stay home, get rest and drink plenty of fluids.

Spill Response

The District has worked very hard over the years to reduce or eliminate hazardous materials in our schools. Despite this, it is still possible for a spill of a substance, such as motor oil, science chemicals and even blood, to occur at one of our sites. Each of these requires specific procedures in order to deal with it properly. Schools should be equipped with different spill kits to deal with a variety of these potential spills. Check with your custodian to see where your kits are located, and if you have any questions, contact Risk Management.

In this issue of *School Safety Matters*, we look forward to a well-deserved break from the normal school day routine, and we ask for help from our teachers and other District staff while buildings are closed over winter break. Following a few simple procedures will go a long way toward protecting building contents and valuables.

- Turn off and unplug small appliances, such as toasters and coffee pots
- Take home your valuable personal property
- Lock away electronic devices whenever possible (important: phones and computers cannot be unplugged or disconnected)

Finally, lock your door, turn off the lights and close the blinds.



Shutting Down for Break



As winter approaches, we need to review our knowledge of critical building systems. By following safe practices and by properly maintaining our buildings, we rarely have to shut these systems down. However, should that need arise, on-site custodians need to be able to quickly and confidently shut down the correct system to prevent injuries and minimize damage to property.

Fire alarm system: It is important to know the location of the main fire panel and how to read it should the fire alarm sound unexpectedly. It is crucial to quickly determine the location or source of the alarm and whether it is real or false.

Fire sprinklers: If one of these should go off for any reason, **other than a fire**, they can cause a great deal of damage in a short period of time. All custodians should know where the shut off for the appropriate zone is located, know how to shut it off and know how to open the drain. Once sprinklers have been turned off, contact Maintenance, Public Safety and Risk Management to let them know in order to restore fire protection as quickly as possible.

Natural gas: Many times when a leak is suspected, it is possible to shut off the gas to the area or appliance without having to shut off the rest of the building. If it is ever necessary to shut down the entire building, it needs to be done correctly. It is also important to notify NW Natural and Maintenance to ensure that it is safe before turning it back on. Gas meters can be damaged if they are not restarted properly. Only the gas company or Maintenance should be allowed to restore service.

It is important to know where main and sub-electrical panels are located, how to shut down the domestic water supply, how to read and identify alarms and troubles on the fire panel and who to call to report problems after hours. Each school is different and there are often systems and conditions that are unique to that particular building. If you have any questions about your building shut offs, contact Maintenance or Risk Management.



Please call Risk Management at ext. 4560 if we can help you with any safety question or if you have any safety tips that should be forwarded to the rest of the District.