



Your Workplace

OUR NATION'S HEALTH IS IN POOR SHAPE. Strong, healthy communities are dependent on strong public health systems across America, and that includes your workplace. National Public Health Week (NPHW) 2010 continues our campaign to create the healthiest nation in one generation, with a special focus on public health's critical role in making America healthier, one community at a time.

We spend just as much time in our workplaces as at home, and health and safety on the job are just as important. Having healthy employees is an important part of doing good business. A comprehensive approach to a healthy workplace recognizes the need for an overall health policy, develops a sustainable culture of health and well-being and demonstrates a commitment to improving the health status of all employees.

Did You Know?

- More than half of the 3.7 million private industry injury and illness cases reported in 2008 involved days away from work, job transfer or work restriction.¹
- Workers who remain sedentary during their workday would have to spend most of their evenings in motion to meet the 10,000 steps a day recommended by health advocates.²
- Workplace nutrition and physical activity programs successfully contribute to weight loss and improve body mass index among employees.³
- Employees who attended work while infected with H1N1 are estimated to have caused the infection of as many as 7 million co-workers.⁴



TAKE ACTION: National Public Health Week Activities

Start small...

- ✓ Stress the importance of offering healthy meal choices in company cafeterias and vending machines.
- ✓ Start a walking group with your colleagues.
- ✓ Take the stairs rather than the elevator or escalator.
- ✓ Suggest an employee assistance program to help employees deal with stress.
- ✓ Promote a tobacco-free workplace.
- ✓ Research local environmental factors that may affect outdoor workplaces.
- ✓ Post the *A Healthier America* video to your Facebook page, your blog or Twitter account and share your personal health story with your friends.
- ✓ Post healthy workplace tips on your company bulletin board or intranet.
- ✓ Tweet about how to improve public health in the workplace. How could you improve your current workplace? Suggestions could include adding more recycling bins, placing hand sanitizer in the common areas or having employers sponsor free flu shots and allowing time off work for employees to receive them.
- ✓ Write a letter to the editor of your local paper that stresses the importance of public health during NPHW and beyond.

Think big...

- ✓ Survey local businesses to determine what they do to keep their employees healthy.
- ✓ Distribute information about the importance of hard-hat and goggle safety on construction sites.
- ✓ Provide incentives for healthy living.
- ✓ Install showers, bike racks, etc.
- ✓ Hold a health fair that advises employees on ways to remain emotionally and physically healthy in their workplaces.
- ✓ Invite local policymakers and other experts to a community roundtable to discuss the role of public health in our nation's health reform discussions and what still needs to be done.
- ✓ Add your own activities, too!

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics. Economic News Release: Workplace Injury and Illness Summary 2008, Oct. 29, 2009.

² California Department of Public Health. Health Statistics Related to Californians and the Workplace. Sept. 2006

³ Anderson et al. The Effectiveness of Worksite Nutrition and Physical Activity Interventions for Controlling Employee Overweight and Obesity: A Systematic Review. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, October 2009; 37(4):340-57.

⁴ Robert Drago, Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University, and Kevin Miller, Ph.D. Sick at Work: Infected Employees in the Workplace During the H1N1 Pandemic. The Institute for Women's Policy Research briefing paper, Feb. 2010.