THE PORCELAIN PRESS

June 2012 - Weeks 1 & 2

Special Points of Interest:

Report your injury - You stop for lunch or head home after work and notice you back is sore or you arm is tingling, what should you do? You need to tell your supervisor and report to the medical office promptly. That way we can all work together to mitigate the cause asap.

Fermilab Site Lunch-time Clean-up: 11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. June 21st, July 19th, August 16th and September 20th. Transportation to clean-up site from WH, GF east side. Hot dogs & refreshments served afterwards to all volunteers! Questions? Contact Roads and Grounds at x3303.

ES&H Concern or Suggestion? Talk to your Supervisor, SSO or go to the ES&H homepage & click on 'Concerns & Suggestions'.

Back Pain and Injury

Heavy lifting, and repetitive movements can take a toll on your back. Whether it's dull and achy or sharp and stabbing, back pain can make it hard to concentrate on your job. Unfortunately, many occupations can place significant demands on your back. Even routine office work can cause or worsen back pain.

What are the common causes of back pain at work?

• **Force.** Exerting too much force on your back, such as by lifting or moving heavy objects, can cause injury.

• **Repetition.** Repeating certain movements can lead to muscle fatigue or injury, particularly if you're stretching to the limit of your range of motion or using awkward body positioning.

• **Posture.** Slouching exaggerates your back's natural curves, which can lead to muscle fatigue and injury.

There are things you can do to reduce the likelihood of a back strain.

• **Pay attention to posture**. If you stand for long periods at work, occasionally rest one foot on a stool or small box. While you stand, hold reading material at eye level.

• **Minimize hazards.** Falls can seriously injure your back. Remove anything from your work space that might cause you to trip.

• **Lift properly.** When lifting and carrying a heavy object, lift with your legs and tighten your core muscles. Hold the object close to your body and lift it between your legs. If an object is too heavy to lift safely, find someone to help you.

• **Modify repetitive tasks.** Think about how you can modify repetitive tasks at work to reduce physical demands on your body. Use lifting devices or adjustable equipment to help you lift loads. If you're on the phone most of the day, try a headset. If you work at a computer, make sure that your monitor and chair are positioned properly. Avoid unnecessary bending, twisting and reaching.

• **Listen to your body.** Try taking a 30-second break every 15 minutes to stretch, move or relax. Or, stand up, stretch and change positions each time you answer the phone, make a call or do another routine task.

• **Address stress.** Stress can change how you perceive pain. Use positive coping mechanisms such as deep-breathing exercises, taking a walk around the block or talking about your frustrations with a trusted friend to handle stress in a healthy way.