



Green  
Wheel  
Cleaners

# Hazards

...be mindful of these hazards to minimize risk of harm



# Workplace Hazards

As much as we all wish it weren't true, workplace hazards are everywhere. Every workplace can be potential harmful, and it is everyone's responsibility to be mindful of these hazards to minimize risk of harm.

Not all hazards are obvious, and they are unique to each workplace. In this guide, we will go over the types of hazards, as well as specific hazards to our workplace and how to prevent them.



# Types of Hazards

There are a multitude of hazards for different workplaces. While working at Green Wheel Cleaners, there are four main hazard types to look out for.

## Hazard Types

- Physical Hazards
- Chemical Hazards
- Biological Hazards
- Ergonomic Hazards

We will go over some general information about each hazard, as well as specific risks that are involved with commercial cleaning.

Check out this video to learn about the 3 most common hazards: Physical, Chemical, and Biological.

## Workplace Hazards

Also check out this video for a more in-depth look at the 6 most common types of workplace hazards:



# Physical Hazards

Physical hazards are brought on by environmental factors. These hazards can harm an employee without necessarily having to touch them. To know if something is a physical hazard, just think about whether or not it is something that can physically harm you. This can include things that fall on you, burn you, or cause loud noise.

## Types of Physical Hazards:

- Radiation (EMFs, microwaves, radio waves, etc.)
- Temperature extremes - hot and cold
- Consistent, loud noise.
- Slips, Trips, and Falls
- Body Stressing



Check out this video for an overview of physical hazards:

# Slips, Trips, And Falls

Slipping, tripping, and falling can put workers at risk of injury. Sprains, strains, bruises, concussions, and fractures can all occur if you take a tumble.

## The Risks

Slips can happen where there is not enough grip or traction between your footwear and the walking surface. This can be caused by water, grease, oil, or dust on the floor. Loose rugs or mats, floors with varying traction, or the wrong footwear can also cause slips.

Trips and falls can occur when people lose their balance after their feet collide with objects.

## Hazard Examples

1. Wet, greasy, or dusty floors
2. Damaged/loose/worn carpets, rugs, or mats
3. Uneven flooring
4. Cluttered walkways
5. Uncovered cables
6. Poor lighting
7. Obstructed view



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# What can I do?

There are a variety of things that you can do to prevent slipping, tripping, and falling in the workplace.

- Survey the area before beginning the clean
- Consider purchasing non-slip shoes
- Turn lights on in the area that you are working

Check out this video and slips, trips, and falls to learn more:



# Body Stressing

Body stressing is a collective term covering a broad range of health problems associated with repetitive and strenuous work. Body stressing is mostly preventable and accounts for a large majority of work claims.

## Common Body Stress Injuries

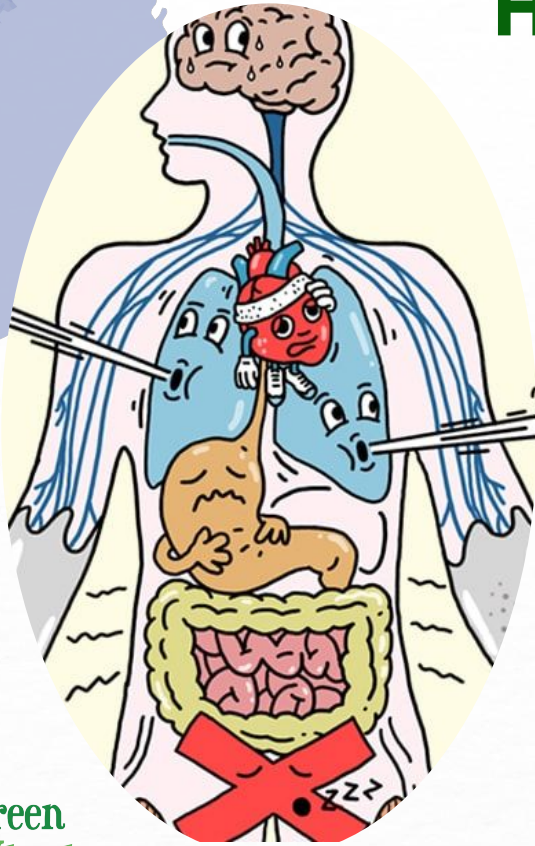
- joint and bone injuries or degeneration
- nerve injuries or compression, or
- chronic pain

## How can Body Stressing Occur?

1. Psychosocial aspects of work – factors such as job demands, control, support and satisfaction, the imbalance between effort and reward and monotony of tasks, financial concerns, etc.
2. Biomechanical - soft tissue damage which may occur through
  - a. direct exposure (blunt trauma or sudden overload), leading to a muscle tear or sprain, or
  - b. indirect exposure (repeated light loading), leading to symptoms that may accumulate to cause further degeneration and injury.
3. Individual worker characteristics – factors including health problems or out-of-hours demands.



# How to Prevent Body Stresses



- Talk to your manager, human resources personnel, a health and safety representative, a colleague, or your general practitioner
- Actively seek information, guidance, or training on working safely
  - Use any equipment or tools provided to reduce exposure to body stressing hazard
  - Take regular breaks – stand up, sit less and move more

Take a look at this video to gain a better understanding of body stressing, and how to prevent it:



# Chemical Hazards

While we work with exclusively non-toxic cleaning products, the same cannot be said for the areas that we are cleaning.

## Cleaning Chemicals

At Green Wheel Cleaners, we use completely non-toxic cleaning products. Even while using greener, safer products, there are still steps that you can take to ensure you keep yourself safe.

1. Read every label, and ensure that every bottle of cleaning product has a label
2. Wear gloves when handling cleaning chemicals
3. Use automated dispensers, like a spray bottle, when using cleaning products
4. Avoid spraying cleaning products near your face



Check out this short video on chemical safety to learn more:

# Biological Hazards

Biological hazards can be found at home, at school, and in the workplace. Biological hazards are caused by plants, animals, or microbes, like bacteria and viruses. All of these can have a potentially deadly impact on our health.

## What are Biological Hazards?

1. Mold and Fungi
2. Blood or bodily fluids
3. Sewage
4. Airborne pathogens such as the common cold
5. Harmful plants
6. Animal and bird droppings
7. Stinging Insects



# Biological Hazards

While this is quite an extensive list, these hazards are very rare in our line of work. You may occasionally have to deal with blood or bodily fluids while cleaning a bathroom or a medical facility. You also need to always be aware of airborne pathogens. With COVID-19, it is extremely important that you are taking necessary precautions to keep yourself safe from airborne pathogens and germs. This includes things like wearing gloves and masks at all times while cleaning.

Check out this short video on chemical safety to learn more:



# Ergonomic Hazards

Ergonomic hazards are factors within your environment that can potentially cause harm to your musculoskeletal system. These hazards are not always obvious, making them difficult to detect. We will take a look at how you can identify ergonomic hazards and remove them from the workplace.

The severity of ergonomic hazards often depends on the level of exposure over time. Slumping over your desk for a few minutes won't feel so bad, but do it for a few hours, and you will feel it the next day.

## What do Ergonomic Hazards Look Like?

1. Improperly adjusted workstations or chairs
2. Frequent lifting
3. Poor posture
4. Awkward or repetitive movement
5. Using too much force frequently.
6. Vibration.



# Preventing Ergonomic Hazards:

Ergonomic hazards are often a result of the way a space is designed, which means we need to plan ahead and think about how we are interacting with our environment.

1. Use proper bending, lifting, and carrying practices
2. Make sure you are handling equipment properly (using the vacuum, mop, dusting, etc.)
3. Take short breaks to reduce short-term strain
4. Adjust the pace of work to reduce exertion
5. Ensure you are practicing good posture while working to prevent injury
6. We will go over a couple of ergonomic hazards that can occur while working on the job.

Take a look at these videos about ergonomics to get a better understanding:



# Bending, Lifting, and Carrying

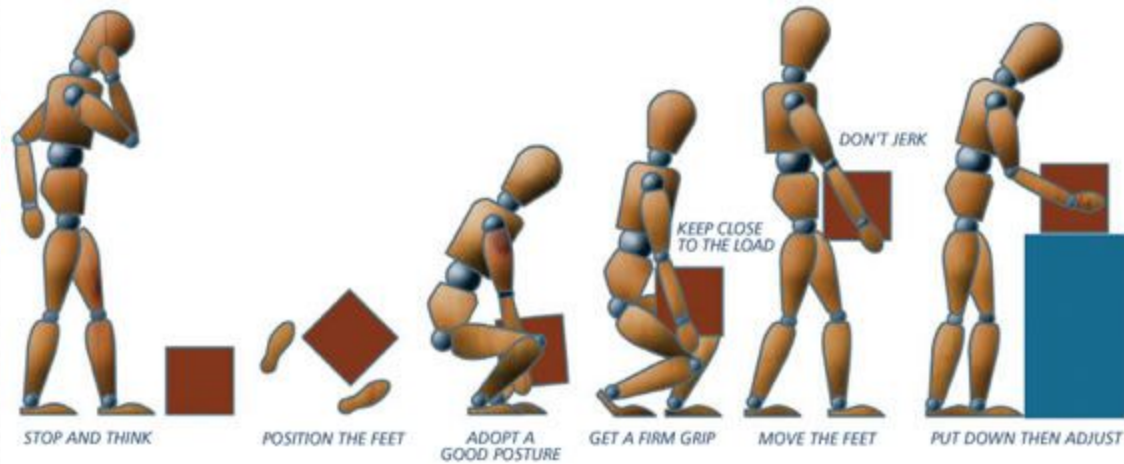
While we do not often have to lift heavy equipment, we do have to lift awkwardly shaped equipment on a regular basis. It is very important to prevent injury to your lower back while you are on the job. Even if you are lifting objects that you don't find particularly heavy, it is important to follow these rules while lifting:

- Place your feet apart for good balance
  - Bend your knees
  - Hold the object as close to your body as possible
  - Lift slowly and smoothly
  - Pivot with your feet - do not twist your back.
  - Push, instead of pull a load
  - It is important to understand your own strengths and limitations.
- Using proper bending, lifting, and sitting techniques on the job to prevent lower back injury.



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# Bending, Lifting, and Carrying



Check out this video to learn more about back injuries and proper lifting: