

Biting and Stinging Insects: Don't Let Them BUG You

Outdoor workers have enough to contend with besides bugs that bite and sting. For most people, bug bites cause temporary redness and pain. But for others, bites and stings may trigger a life-threatening emergency. Understanding the risks and basic treatment can help all outdoors workers deal with these pests.

Avoid the insect world's most wanted

Mosquitoes, fleas, black flies, mites, chiggers and ticks use their mouth to suck blood from humans. Bees, hornets, yellow jackets, wasps and scorpions use a stinger to inject their venom. Spiders and ants both sting and bite.

Bug bites give most people minor skin reactions like swelling, redness, pain and itching. Sometimes there is excess swelling at the bite site. Bites can also cause headaches and vomiting.

Tick bites do not usually cause an immediate reaction, but are dangerous because they can transmit Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and other diseases. Ticks normally attach to humans on the scalp or under the arms. Always check for ticks, especially after working in wooded, swampy or grassy areas. A tick bite might look like a small rash sometimes taking the form of a bull's eye.

Don't be a bug bistro

The best way to avoid bites is to make yourself unappetizing to bugs. Sweet smells attract insects. Don't leave out food or open drinks. Never drink from a can or bottle that might have an insect inside.

Do not use colognes, perfumes, scented soaps or hairsprays. Do apply insect repellent (follow directions on label).

Cover up with long pants, long-sleeve shirts, socks, shoes and a hat. Dress in pale colors, such as light green, tan and khaki, and avoid clothing with bright colors or flowery prints. Protect your hands with gloves.

First Aid

Some basic first-aid steps can relieve bite pain and help prevent infection. Clean the area around the bite with soap and water and apply ice or a cold pack. If the stinger is still in the wound, remove it before washing and icing the area by scraping the surface with something stiff like a credit card or knife blade. Do not squeeze the area, or the stinger will release more venom.

If the bite is from a spider or scorpion, capture the insect and seek medical attention. Most spiders and scorpions in the United States are not poisonous, but some bites (e.g. all brown recluse spider bites) will need a doctor's attention.

When removing ticks, use a pair of tweezers to grasp the tick close to the skin. Pull very gently until the tick lets go. Avoid pulling too hard or jerking, which may leave part of the tick in the skin. Wash the area with soap and water, then put an antiseptic such as

rubbing alcohol on the site. Seek medical attention if a rash appears around the site or the victim later experiences chills, joint pain or other flu-like symptoms.

Act on allergies

Individuals who have an allergic reaction to bites and stings experience severe symptoms that require emergency medical attention.

One severe reaction, called anaphylaxis, causes a person's eyes, nose, lips, throat and tongue to swell, possibly resulting in difficulty breathing. This reaction usually starts just minutes after the sting and in some cases may be fatal.

If this occurs, call 911 or your local/work emergency number immediately. Anyone who has experienced a severe reaction to an insect bite should be notified of any allergies so if an employee with insect allergy is stung, they know how to properly react.

National Safety Council

Protecting yourself in the sun

Sunlight contains ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which causes premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and skin cancer. The amount of damage from UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. *There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans.*

Skin Cancer

Sun exposure at any age can cause skin cancer. Be especially careful in the sun if you burn easily, spend a lot of time outdoors, or have any of the following physical features:

Numerous, irregular, or large moles.

Freckles.

Fair skin.

Blonde, red, or light brown hair.

Self Examination

It's important to examine your body monthly because skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured. The most important warning sign is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color during a period of 1 month to 1 or 2 years.

Skin cancers often take the following forms:

Pale, wax-like, pearly nodules.

Red, scaly, sharply outlined patches.

Sores that don't heal.

Small, mole-like growths—melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer.

If you find such unusual skin changes, see a health care professional immediately.

Homemade Extension Cords

Extension cords using either 4 inch square metal boxes with duplex outlets or handy-boxes with an outlet cannot be used. It is an OSHA violation, because:

the knock-outs in the box can allow water or condensation inside the box and might drip inside causing a short.

the extension cord is not U.L. listed.

the metal box is meant to be permanently fastened against a surface and used as an outlet.

It makes sense once it is explained. Buy U.L. listed plastic molded portable extension cords and be safe. Yes, they can be purchased with the GFIC protection for added safety.

*By Dave Engebretson
NJSBAIG Loss Control Representative*

Claims Corner Article:

NEW Internal Managed Care Team

Effective July 1, 2007, NJSBAIG has formed a new internal managed care team to handle follow-up medical treatment on medical only claims. As noted in our June 1, 2007 bulletin, all workers' compensation claims are to be called into QualCare at 1-800-425-3222 who will make an appointment for initial medical treatment. If the claim does not involve lost time, follow-up treatment will be arranged by our new internal team. If the claim involves lost time, all treatment will be coordinated by QualCare.

Our new internal team is headed up by Connie Rogers, Claims Supervisor, who can be reached at 1-888-657-6651 extension 3015. The Team Leader is Joan Madden, extension 3092, Tiffani Reed, extension 3048 and Sandra Hodge, extension 3097 are the Medical Claim Assistants. This team is dedicated to providing our member districts and their employees with top notch claim handling and customer service. You will recognize Connie Rogers and Tiffani Reed as seasoned members of the NJSBAIG staff. Joan Madden and Sandra Hodge are new to the Group, however, both have years of experience in insurance customer service.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact any member of the team or myself at extension 3049.

*Mike Cox
Assistant NJSBAIG Claim Manager*

Who Has Keys to Your Locks?

Last year, in five separate instances, one district had over \$139,000 of new computers stolen. Several of the thefts occurred from locked storerooms and the police investigation revealed no sign of forced entry. Unfortunately, key and access control to sensitive areas is a deficiency at many school districts. A basic program is outlined below.

Sensitive areas and storerooms must be locked and access limited. These rooms must be maintained and cleaned when the responsible person is in attendance. In school districts, thefts are common from IT, athletic, AV, and musical instrument storerooms. Other sensitive areas are records rooms, chemical storerooms, laboratories, dark rooms, security camera rooms, and building system rooms.

Keys must be stamped "Do Not Duplicate" and if need be, can be stamped with an identifying number or symbol.

Employees are only issued keys to areas that are required for the performance of job duties. These keys are returned upon reassignment or termination.

Dependant upon the size of the school district, a "Key Master" must be appointed at the district or individual school level. This person is in charge of recording issued and returned keys and reporting any discrepancies. A simple Excel spread sheet or an Access database can be utilized to create an employee file and issued keys.

Employees are responsible for reporting lost keys and are accountable for the keys in their possession. If an employee is in the habit of losing their keys, a payment policy for new keys and/or lock replacement should be established.

Obviously, a key control program will not eliminate theft, but it will help protect district resources and increase employee accountability. If you would like further information about a key control program or security in general, please contact Stephen Williams of the NJSBAIG Loss Control Department at 609-386-6060 extension 3045.

*By Steve Williams
NJSBAIG Loss Control Representative*

Get Creative with the WeTip Message to Keep it Fresh

To keep the WeTip message visible and fresh throughout school campuses, it's important to regularly change the posters around. WeTip has a variety of free posters available. By ordering several different types and moving them to varying locations, the WeTip contact information will continue to stand out.

There's also the opportunity to be creative with the WeTip message. Consider a poster contest for students where the winning entries will be mounted throughout the schools. School mascots and mottos can be incorporated into the messages. Graphic arts students can also create WeTip posters unique to their schools as classroom projects.

Each district has a liaison for the WeTip program. Contact that individual to request

posters, to arrange a program presentation to your school or to learn more about the program in general. For liaison or general information, contact Marty Kalbach at mkalbach@njsbaig.org or 609-386-6060 extension 3024.

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