

September 2019

Hello RETRO Members,

September is **National Preparedness Month** and this is the time to make sure that your business and employees are prepared for emergencies. Take a moment to go through your first aid and earthquake kits replenishing items as needed. Go over your emergency plan. Will you be ready if there is a disaster? Perform a hazard inspection and correct and secure items that need attention. Will your business be able to remain open if there is a disaster? Don't wait to find out that you're not ready. Get a kit, make a plan and be informed. Here is a link to a great website for comprehensive [business planning and preparedness](#).

First topic is: **Personal Protective Gear** – PPE has a purpose and that is to help shield your body from injury. It can be your eyes, head, feet, ears, lungs and even your hands. Make sure your employees know how to use and to inspect their PPE daily to make sure it is in good working condition. It is important to use PPE, even if the job will only take a few minutes, which is all it would take for a chemical or fragment to fly into an unprotected eye or a heavy object to fall on an unprotected head or foot. The price of protection is much cheaper than the injury that can result from not using this gear!

The [RS Safety Library](#) has a section of PPE information where you can review one type of PPE or the whole category.

The second item: **Ergonomics** – also known as human factors and ergonomics, which is comfort design, functional design and user-friendly systems. It is the practice of designing products, systems or processes to take proper account of the interaction between them and the people who use them. You mainly hear of this in office situations, but it is also relevant to all work processes, as we need to accomplish tasks utilizing the body's most natural movements and reducing overexertion.

An example would be reaching overhead. Your shoulders prefer that you reach no higher than the top of your head. Once you pass that point you are taking your shoulder rotator cuff out of its normal operation which can lead to an overexertion injury. It is better to get the step ladder and raise your body higher to make it easier to do the task. Another option is to put the more common items in the shoulder to knee range.

The office is less physical, but over time it leads can lead to problems if you don't recognize them early on. A recommended watch is video on [RS SafetyTV/ergo](#).

Check out [RS Safety Library](#) or [TV](#) for information and videos on this topic.

Lastly: **Welding Safety** - Welding, torching and brazing is a common activity in some of our member's shops. There are various types of welding methods for different uses. Each one has needs to be thoroughly understood. The store manager must ensure all equipment is code-compliant, in safe working order and that users are properly trained in the safe use of that equipment. WAC

PPE – Proper PPE varies with type of welding. Make sure you use correct eye protection, gloves, and appropriate clothing shall be worn whenever operating this tool. Other persons adjacent to the welding area shall be notified of the activity allowing them to put on proper PPE or to leave the area.

Precautions such as isolating welding and cutting, removing fire hazards and combustibles shall be taken in areas where welding or other "hot work" is performed. A fire extinguisher must be located adjacent to the activity and should be immediately available.

[RS Safety Library](#) has some handouts and a video on welding safety.

Thinking of safety for you,

Rick Means, CSMP

Safety Specialist

Retail Association Services

618 Quince SE Olympia, WA 98501

rmeans@waretailservices.com

360-943-9198 ext. 18