# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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## PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Contra Costa Water District (District) Ergonomics Program (Program) is to ensure a working environment for District employees that will minimize the occurrence of repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries, and provide workspaces (defined as the physical area of work whether in the office or in the field) that are approximately designed and equipped for the tasks to be performed and the employees that work in them. The Program will meet the requirements of California's Ergonomics Standard (Ergonomics Standard), which is Section 5110, Repetitive Motion Injuries, of Title 8, California Code of Regulations, aimed at controlling work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

## POLICY:

It is the policy of the District that all District employees have the necessary knowledge, training and resources to minimize repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries, and to provide a work environment that protects employees from ergonomics related injuries.

## SCOPE:

Ergonomics is defined as the process of designing the equipment, methods, and workplace (defined as the physical area of work whether in the office or in the field) to fit the worker, and thus the Program has broad applicability throughout the District. The Program is an integral element of the District's Safety Program. The Program shall apply wherever repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries can occur. The Program defined in this AP is not intended to be stand-alone, but to be integrated within the overall Safety Program, including its Safety committees and Safety Officer.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The implementation of a successful Program will require the efforts across a wide range of personnel. The District Safety Officer, Supervisors and Employees shall work together as a team to minimize repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries, and to ensure prompt reporting and timely treatment when such injuries do occur. The District Safety Committee can also serve a role in assisting the Program with feedback and potential solutions. In addition, the District's Risk Management Officer oversees worker's compensation issues and must be kept informed of all ergonomic issues to assist in better management of ergonomic related worker's compensation.
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District Safety Officer
The District Safety Officer (SO) is responsible for overseeing the Program. The SO will be
responsible for procuring and retaining a qualified ergonomics consultant to provide evaluations
for employees as needed. The SO also provides ergonomic training to employees as appropriate
or as identified. All new employees shall receive ergonomic training and evaluation under the
direction of the SO within two weeks of their first day at work.

Supervisors
Supervisors are responsible for understanding basic safety and ergonomics issues and for
monitoring the work environment. Supervisors will regularly review with their staff (can be done
as part of regular safety audit) to determine whether ergonomic evaluations, safer equipment, or
training is needed. Supervisors must follow up on employee concerns and the status of
recommendations made through ergonomic evaluations. Supervisors will be supportive of their
employees’ efforts to seek proper ergonomic solutions, and are responsible for ensuring that their
employees have the proper training and equipment. Supervisors should also observe their
employees for signs of repetitive motion and/or musculoskeletal injury, and report to the SO any
such injury to be addressed.

Employees
Employees are responsible for monitoring their work environments, practicing proper ergonomic
and safe work habits, and contacting their supervisor to request additional ergonomics training
and evaluation as needed. If employees experience symptoms related to ergonomic impact in
their working environment, they are to immediately report this to their supervisor who will
contact the SO to schedule an ergonomic evaluation. The employee is responsible for
implementing recommendations, training and equipment provided as a result of the evaluation,
including requesting any needed equipment or tools. If there are symptoms of repetitive motion
and/or musculoskeletal injury, employees should immediately report this as described in the
District’s Administrative Procedure IX-8 Industrial Injury Reporting.

District Safety Committee and Site Safety Committees
These committees are responsible for providing an additional forum for communicating feedback
related to ergonomics issues. Committee members will reach out to employees. The Site Safety
Committees with assistance from the SO can provide a general monitoring system to determine
the effectiveness of the Program through employee feedback. Safety committees may discuss
and develop potential ergonomic solutions.

PROCEDURE
The Program is designed as an integrated program that consists of five components:
- Communications – to ensure that employees are aware of the Program and ergonomic
  issues and know what resources are available.
- Training – to provide employees and supervisors the necessary knowledge to identify
  areas of exposure to repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries and to practice good
  ergonomic habits
- Evaluation – to identify workspaces (defined as the physical area of work whether in the
  office or in the field) in the District where there is exposure to repetitive motion and
musculoskeletal injuries, to provide ergonomic evaluations of individual workspaces, and to develop ergonomic solutions for identified exposures

- **Implementation** – to implement ergonomic solutions and ensure that the necessary resources (evaluations, training or equipment/tools) are available
- **Monitoring** – to monitor the success of the Program and make periodic adjustments to improve it.

**Communications**

**General**
Employees shall be made aware of the procedure for obtaining assistance with ergonomic issues and obtaining the appropriate equipment and training. They shall be encouraged to seek assistance from their supervisor before experiencing chronic problems. The Site Safety Committees will be responsible for maintaining awareness of ergonomic issues and provide periodic reminders of resources available through the Program.

**Ergonomics Information**
The SO will be responsible for identifying and procuring appropriate informational materials related to repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries and proper ergonomics practices. This information should be disseminated through a variety of channels including the District’s website, safety bulletin areas at key District work centers, the District’s Injury and Illness Prevention Program and the District’s Employee Safety Handbook.

Supervisors should provide each new employee with a basic set of ergonomics information including handouts showing proper ergonomic habits, proper stretching exercises, and a listing of who to call and where to go for additional resources. Employees transferring between departments or moving to a different job classification should receive any material specific to the activities of their new position.

**Training**

**Employee Training**
Each employee will receive proper training in the techniques to practice effective ergonomic work habits. Initial ergonomic training shall be provided to each employee as part of their new hire orientation or when changing job classifications for employees that will experience a significant change in work environment or workplace. Periodic refresher general ergonomics training shall be given on an annual basis to all employees. Employees shall also receive training on how to recognize and promptly report and seek treatment for symptoms of repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries. This shall include a review of the District injury reporting procedures as described in Administrative Procedure IX-8 Industrial Injury Reporting.

**Supervisor Training**
Supervisors are required to receive training (at least once) on how to recognize risk factors for repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries, and how to identify poor ergonomic practices. The training should provide supervisors with the ability to impart ergonomic awareness to their
staff. Supervisors shall also receive training in the Program and be familiar with its requirements.

Evaluation

Workspace Inventory
The SO oversees workspaces and activities where there are potential exposures to repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries. A workspace inventory shall be maintained by the SO that clearly identifies the exposures by workspace or activity and provides potential solutions to reduce or eliminate the exposure. Site Safety Committee members may assist in evaluations when they have specific knowledge to the workplace.

Individual Ergonomic Evaluations
Individualized evaluations of employees’ personal workstations support employees’ ergonomic needs and help reduce the risk of injury. Supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that employees obtain the necessary individual ergonomic evaluations. The SO will be responsible for maintaining a contact list of persons qualified to perform the evaluations.

Initial evaluation: Every new employee shall be provided with an ergonomic evaluation by a qualified person. The SO is responsible to ensure a complete ergonomic evaluation is performed. Employees moving to a different workspace shall also be provided with an ergonomic evaluation upon request. An ergonomic evaluation will include a recommendation for optimal workspace arrangement, equipment and a review of proper ergonomic practices.

Periodic evaluations: Employees may request updated ergonomic evaluations as necessary, provided as quickly as possible.

The results of each evaluation shall be provided to the employee, the supervisor, the SO and the Risk Management Officer. Equipment needs identified through the ergonomic evaluation shall be fulfilled in the most reasonable and economic manner through the department budget. Such needs shall be met as soon as possible. If there are fiscal year budget constraints that would prevent timely purchase of the equipment, then the District’s ergonomics budget allocated in the District’s safety program budget is an alternative.

Implementation

Ergonomic Resources
Approved ergonomic equipment or resources recommended in the ergonomic evaluations will be reasonably implemented as soon after the evaluation as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days. Resources can include, but are not limited to: mechanical lifting equipment, adjustable chairs, keyboard trays, ergonomic keyboards, and software (e.g. key counting and break enforcing). Additionally, solutions may require rearrangement or reorganization of the workspace (e.g. lowering or elevating of cubicle desktops).

Ergonomic Seating
Ergonomically correct seating is an important component of a properly designed ergonomic workspace. Providing chairs with proper ergonomic function will reduce injury and maximize
productivity for employees who spend a significant amount of time engaged in stationary activities such as computer work and typing. As a minimum, each employee whose work presents exposure to repetitive motion and musculoskeletal injuries should be provided with a fully adjustable chair. Most of the employees’ needs should be met with a standard fully adjustable chair. Due to inherent variability in personal dimensions, posture, and other considerations, a certain proportion of employees will require chairs that offer more specialized functions and features. The SO will work with the Purchasing Officer to ensure that correct chairs meeting ergonomic standards will be procured to meet employees’ specific needs identified in the ergonomic evaluation while ensuring that costs are justified and well supported.

**District Central Ergonomics Budget**
Each department shall be responsible for maintaining adequate budget to meet basic ergonomic equipment needs of their staff. A District ergonomics budget shall be maintained in the District’s Safety Program to augment the department budgets and to allow for timely implementation of ergonomic recommendations that require purchases beyond the respective departments’ budget. The SO manages the ergonomics budget.

**Monitoring**

**Monitoring**
The Site Safety Committees with the assistance from the SO shall track ergonomics issues in their areas. Statistics shall be compiled and reviewed annually to determine the effectiveness of the program. A regular survey of staff shall be conducted to determine satisfaction in the handling of ergonomics issues. The monitoring program shall also contain tracking of employee satisfaction with the response time and delivery of needed equipment.

APPROVED:

[Signature]

Jerry Brown
General Manager

Attachments: Exhibit A - California’s Ergonomics Standard
Attachment 1
California's Ergonomics Standard

Title 8, California Code of Regulations (CCRs), Section 5110. Effective July 3, 1997.

Subchapter 7. General Industry Safety Orders
Group 15. Occupational Noise
Article 106. Ergonomics

§5110. Repetitive Motion Injuries.

(a) Scope and application. This section shall apply to a job, process, operation where a repetitive motion injury (RMI) has occurred to more than one employee under the following conditions:

1. Work related causation. The repetitive motion injuries (RMIs) were predominately caused (i.e. 50% or more) by a repetitive job, process, or operation;

2. Relationship between RMIs at the workplace. The employees incurring the RMIs were performing a job process, or operation of identical work activity. Identical work activity means that the employees were performing the same repetitive motion task, such as but not limited to word processing, assembly or, loading;

3. Medical requirements. The RMIs were musculoskeletal injuries that a licensed physician objectively identified and diagnosed; and

4. Time requirements. The RMIs were reported by the employees to the employer in the last 12 months, but not before July 3, 1997.

(b) Program designed to minimize RMIs. Every employer subject to this section shall establish and implement a program designed to minimize RMIs. The program shall include a worksite evaluation, control of exposures which have caused RMIs, and training of employees.

1. Worksite evaluation. Each job, process, or operation of identical work activity covered by this section or a representative number of such jobs, processes, or operations of identical work activities shall be evaluated for exposures which have caused RMIs.

2. Control of exposures which have caused RMIs. Any exposures that have caused RMIs shall, in a timely manner, be corrected or if not capable of being corrected have the exposures minimized to the extent feasible. The employer shall consider engineering controls, such as workstation redesign, adjustable fixtures or tool redesign, and administrative controls, such as job rotation, work pacing or work breaks.

3. Training. Employees shall be provided training that includes an explanation of:

A. The employer's program;
B. The exposures which have been associated with RMIs;
C. The symptoms and consequences of injuries caused by repetitive motion;
D. The importance of reporting symptoms and injuries to the employer; and,
E. Methods used by the employer to minimize RMIs.

(c) Satisfaction of an employer's obligation. Measures implemented by an employer under subsection (b)(1), (b)(2), or (b)(3) shall satisfy the employer's obligations under that respective subsection, unless it is shown that a measure known to but not taken by the employer is substantially certain to cause a greater reduction in such injuries and that this alternative measure would not impose additional unreasonable costs.