

# THE YUK REPORT

Expert Poison Information 24/7

Washington Poison Center

1-800-222-1222

Fall 2010

## Tips to Avoid a Toxic Workplace

While the vast majority of poison exposures occur in the home, the workplace, despite its sometimes bland and sterile environment, has its own risks.

It's easy to take dangers in the office for granted, particularly when focused on getting a job done. But poison exposures that occurred in the workplace are reported everyday to poison centers nationwide – putting workplaces a distant second to homes as sites where poison exposures occurred.

The Washington Poison Center (WAPC) wants to reduce poisonings in every setting, including at work. The following tips are aimed at keeping the workplace “poison-free:”

- Be careful when handling laser printer cartridges. A poison exposure can occur when laser printer cartridge ink is spilled. Fumes, dust, or ozone from cartridges can be dangerous if inhaled.
- Fluorescent light bulbs contain silica or mercury and should

be handled and replaced by professionals. The same goes for energy-efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs, or CFL bulbs.

- Beware of the lunchroom, and particularly the office refrigerator.

the bathrooms, or other workplace cleaning supplies, casually. Mixing or handling such products improperly can cause irritation to the skin, or breathing difficulties.

- The same dangers present in the household are also a danger in the workplace. Read labels and use caution when taking over-the-counter or prescription medications, particularly if handling potentially dangerous equipment or instruments on the job.

- Be wary of bugs. Ants and other insects can enter an office building through leaking windows or siding. To most, these bugs are just a nuisance,

but to those allergic to their bites, such an infestation can cause a bad reaction. Spiders, as well, can be found in old stored boxes or in unused files, old file cabinets or drawers, and under unmoved furniture or old carpet.

If you believe you've been exposed to a poison or have questions about whether a substance is poisonous, call the WAPC at **1-800-222-1222**. A Poison Information Specialist will be available to answer your call 24/7.

### Did you know . . .

... we received just under 1,000 calls about workplace exposures last year?

... our billboards were viewed approximately 25 million times over the last two years?

... the WAPC answers calls about ingestion of school supplies (glue, glitter, ink, crayons, white out, etc...)?

Foods stored in the company break or lunchroom refrigerator can be outdated, leaving the potential for food poisoning.

- Office supplies such as keyboard cleaners, markers, glues, or white-out help to get the job done, but can be a danger if inhaled. Make sure these key office supplies are used for their intended purpose.

- Don't treat air fresheners in

### From the Files

#### BLACK LIPS

I was cleaning the kitchen while my 3 1/2 year old, Hannah, played in her room. After it had been quiet for awhile, I thought I should see if she had fallen asleep. She was washing her hands. I gasped when I saw that her lips were black...BLACK! “What did you get into?” I said. No response. “I promise; I won't be mad, just tell me why your lips are black.” She pointed to some garbage by the printer. She had gotten into one of those printer ink refill kits - the kind with the vials and syringes so you can do it yourself. I asked her if she swallowed any, and asked her to stick out her tongue. Tongue still looked pink, but I was skeptical when she said no. We ran downstairs and I quickly found the poison control number. While the phone rang, I quickly scanned the directions for any warnings for ingestion. None! The lady that answered the phone was super nice and didn't think that the ink would cause much more than stomach upset and possibly vomiting. Otherwise she should be fine. Phew! Thanks Poison Center for knowing the answer and helping an anxious mom feel better!

~ Susan Wold, Snohomish, WA

# Mr. Yuk Rules

The Mr. Yuk Poster Contest for 2011 will be “Mr. Yuk Rules.” The winning poster will be part of the 2011 Poison Prevention Week campaign, celebrated across Washington State in March.

We are looking for young artists to create poison safety awareness and eye-catching posters. The contest is open to all 6 to 12-year-olds in Washington State. Top prize earns a \$500 check card, a visit from Mr. Yuk, and the winner’s design will be featured as the poster for Poison Prevention Week in Washington State. If funding permits, the poster will also be featured on billboards. Four runners-up will also be chosen, and each will receive a \$100 check card. All contest participants will receive a small gift from Mr. Yuk in the mail.

**Posters (with entry form) must be post-marked by January 1, 2011.**

Mr. Yuk Rules poster contest was funded in part by Umpqua Bank and Seattle Children’s Hospital.

*Please clip and mail with your child’s poster:*

Mail to:  
Washington Poison Center  
Poster Contest  
155 NE 100th St, #100  
Seattle, WA 98125-8007



<b>Child's Name:</b>	
<b>Child's Age:</b>	
<b>Parent/Guardian Name:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>City &amp; Zip Code:</b>	

(must be postmarked between 08/01/10 and 01/01/11)

**Register Now**

*An Evening of Wine & Chocolate*  
benefiting the Washington Poison Center

Thursday, September 30, 2010  
6:30 - 9:30 pm

Join us for an elegant evening with *great wine, great chocolate & great friends* while supporting the Washington Poison Center.

**Support Mr. Yuk**

Click online to donate at [www.wapc.org](http://www.wapc.org):

WAPC is an Equal Opportunity Employer

**Follow Mr. Yuk Online:**

facebook.com/MrYukWA  
twitter.com/MrYukWA

wapc.org

**Call 1-800-222-1222 for:**

Poison Emergencies  
Plant Toxicity  
Medication Questions  
Mr. Yuk Stickers

and More! (does not need to be an emergency to call)

Read our monthly press releases online at [www.wapc.org](http://www.wapc.org) or find them in the notes section on our Facebook page.