

## Working Safely is Important – Even During the Strike

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This is a difficult time for MTA employees. Many of our normal duties have been interrupted for the sake of maintaining the business during the strike. Whether or not you are engaged in strike-related duties or are carrying out your regular duties, it is important for you to know that I am proud of you all for your professionalism and diligence. Keep up the good work!

Many of you are serving as volunteers to make the buses and trains ready for service when the strike ends. Make sure you use appropriate protection when applying or spraying solvents and cleaners on seats and surfaces. Make sure the windows and at least one door are open for ventilation. Wear the safety glasses and use the gloves provided. Be careful while in the yard, and stay in defined crosswalks.

For those of you working in Telephone Information, please remember that you are working at a new desk and should follow the attached "comfort tips" when setting up the desk for the first time. We often forget to organize our workspace ergonomically so that working is more comfortable and strains are minimized. For example, just making sure that the top of the screen is at eye level should help reduce neck discomfort.

Managers and supervisors should continue to practice field observation and feedback skills. Just because we are on strike does not relieve us of the responsibility to observe and correct safety problems as they arise. Remember that our volunteers are working outside of their normal range of activities; we must keep them safe and show the operating community that we can do it without accident or injury!

Keep working safely.... we need you back tomorrow.

### Comfort Tips for Computer Users

Stress and fatigue symptoms from working at computer terminals can be avoided with good posture, good work habits, and adjustments to the equipment on which you work. The following tips should help minimize these symptoms and maximize your personal comfort.

#### Posture

- All body angles - hips, knees, and elbows - should be at or around 90 degrees.
- Sit up with chair tilted back slightly.
- Your head should be upright, facing forward.

- The backs of your knees should not be in contact with the chair seat with thighs approximately parallel to the floor.
- Your shoulders should be relaxed.
- Your feet should be flat on the floor, or on a footrest.
- Your back should be firmly supported.
- Your arms should rest lightly on the armrests of the chair.
- Your wrists should be straight and flat, not bent backwards.

### **Equipment**

- Your keyboard angle should be adjusted as flat as possible or slightly downhill and the keyboard should be at elbow height.
- Your mouse or other input device should be on at elbow height, next to your keyboard.
- The top of your monitor should be slightly below eye level.
- Adjust your chair and the height of your keyboard so you can follow the above posture guidelines.
- Use a wrist rest if you find it difficult or tiring to hold your wrists level. Never plant your wrists on the wrist rest while you key. Use it to support your palms between keying activities.
- Adjust your monitor so the contrast is high, the brightness low. You may need to adjust it several times during the day, as room light changes.
- Adjust the angle of your monitor to reduce glare or reflection. Try to have your monitor at right angles to windows or long banks of light.
- Keep the screen free of dust and fingerprints.
- If the display is blurry or jittery, report it to your supervisor.

### **Work Habits**

- Use a lighter touch on the keyboard to reduce shock to your wrists.
- Use a document holder if you often type material from other sources. Task lighting may be necessary to read the material.

- Periodically focus your eyes on something at least 20 feet away.
- Take a minute every so often to stretch and vary your routine.
- Periodically change your posture throughout the day.
- Build dynamic work into your day. You should perform 15 min. of non-keying activity for every 2 hours of keying.
- Do not cradle the telephone between your shoulder and neck while keying.

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