

# Environmental Health and Safety's

By: Kirstan Blender, safety specialist

## Guide to Office Safety



There is a misconception that hazards or other safety concerns are found only in shops, labs, medical facilities, or outside. However, office spaces, where a majority of UNC Charlotte employees work, are not absent from hazards.

## 4 Ways You Can Reduce Hazards

"One of the goals of the Environmental Health and Safety Office is to incorporate safety into everyday office activities, especially those that seem less hazardous," said Darius Griffin, director of environmental health and safety.



### 1. Encourage your colleagues

Encourage your colleagues to act safely and develop safe behaviors. Remember that everyone has the authority to reduce hazards by preventing and reporting.

### 2. Take action when you see concern

If you have the ability to do so and it will not cause additional harm, you can remove the hazard.



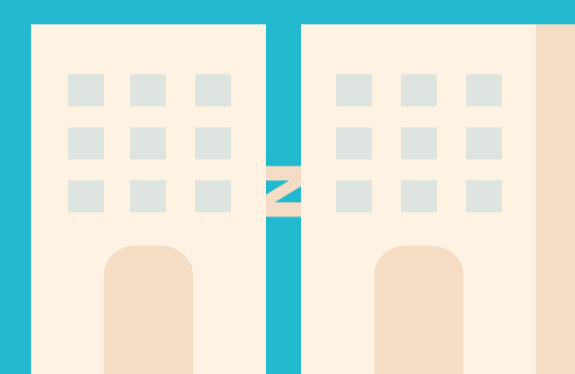
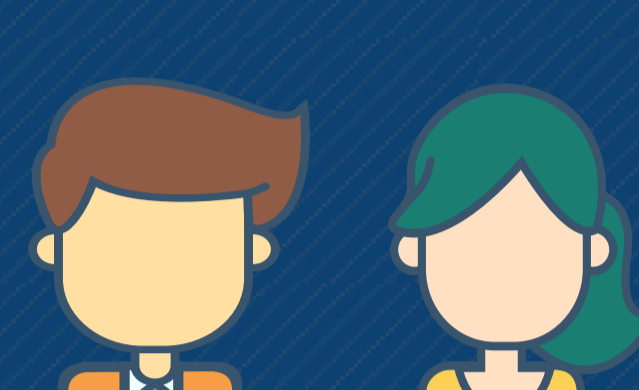
### 3. Notify the appropriate department



For instance, if there is damaged flooring you can contact Facilities Management. You can also report hazards to EHS under the Help tab at [safety.uncc.edu](http://safety.uncc.edu).

### 4. You can also report hazards

You can also report hazards to EHS, who can help facilitate correction or removal.

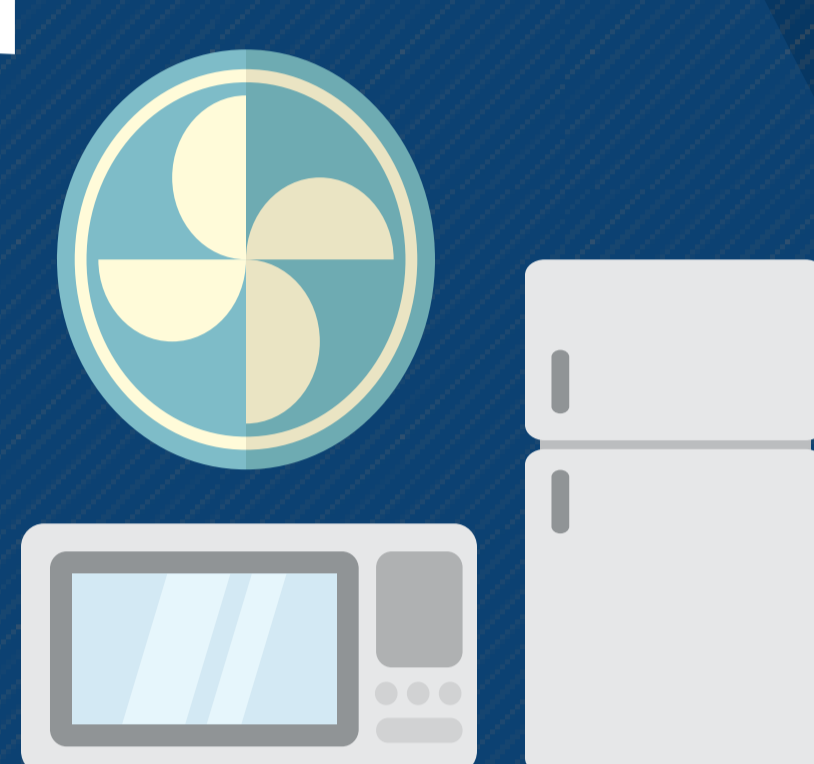


## Building Safety

Building safety is ensuring individuals can safely move throughout the building, especially in the event of an evacuation. Below are a few tips and reminders on a few ways you can promote safety within your building.

### Appliances

Space heaters, microwaves, coffee makers and refrigerators – should be plugged directly into a wall electrical outlet instead of a power strip. Those items can require more electricity than what a power strip can safely provide, which could cause the power strip to overload and start a fire.



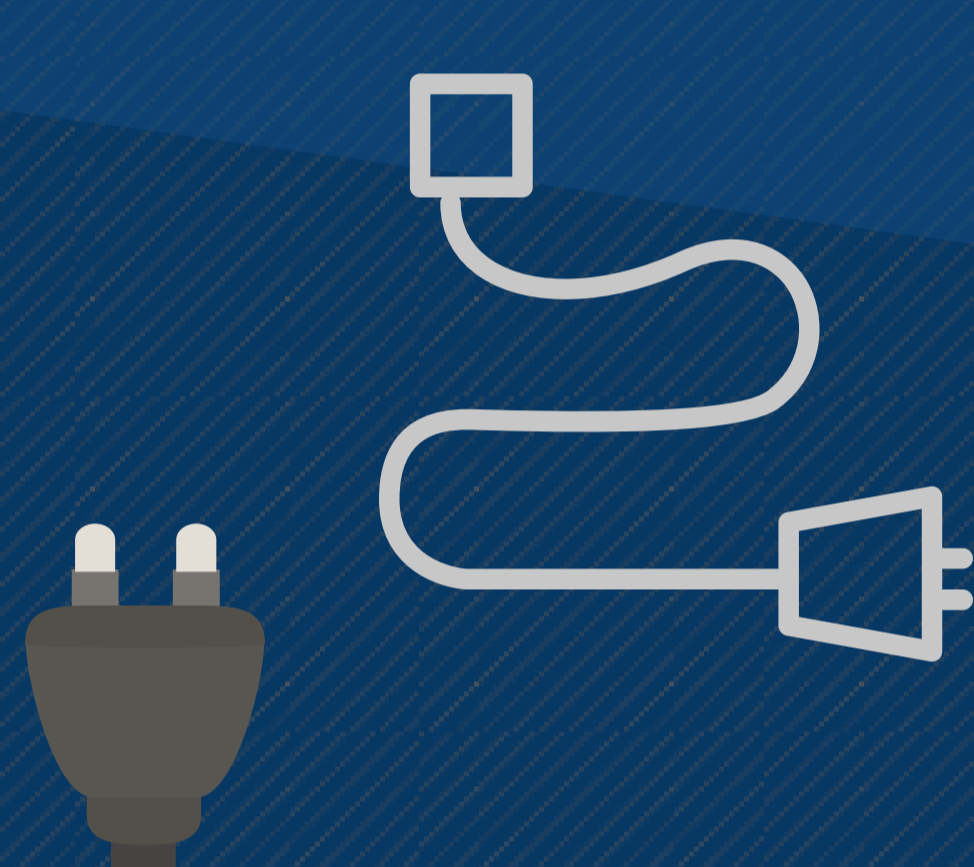
### Space Heaters

If used incorrectly, space heaters can become a fire hazard. The [Space Heater fact sheet](#) provides guidance on approved features, use and the EHS evaluation process.



### Electrical Cords

Never use cords that are cracked, frayed or broken. Cords should not run underneath carpet, across hallways, or through doors or windows. They could become a trip hazard if not secured.



### Clutter

Keep aisles and walkways clear. In the event of an evacuation, it is crucial to have an unobstructed route.



### Emergency

Know your building's designated assembly location in the event you need to evacuate. Each building's emergency evacuation plan can be found at [safety.uncc.edu](http://safety.uncc.edu). The [Building Safety fact sheet](#) and [Fire Prevention Plan](#) provide additional building safety information.



## Ergonomic Concerns

Ergonomic concerns are frequently associated with office workstations. Since you spend so much time there, ensure it is properly set up.

### Remember

Take regular breaks to stand up and move.

On the phone for a long time? Use a headset.

Conduct a self assessment to check if your work station is ergonomically set up using by using the [fact sheet](#) on the EHS website.



## Slips, Trips, Falls

Slip, trip and fall incidents are the leading cause of injury at UNC Charlotte and can occur even in the office environment.

### Always

Close doors, drawers, and appliances after each use.

Watch out for damaged flooring.

Turn lights on when entering a room.

Pay attention to wet floor signs.

During inclement weather, dry your shoes when enter a building. Use umbrella bags when available.

Consult the Injury Prevention and Slips, Trips and Falls [fact sheets](#)

## Additional Information :

Information about office safety and a variety of topics is available on the [EHS website](#), including trainings for the professional office work environment. For questions, please contact EHS via email at [EHSoffice@uncc.edu](mailto:EHSoffice@uncc.edu) or phone at 7-1111.