

Health and Safety Bulletin – August 2010

To all CPAA Members:

The Postmaster, in the majority of offices with less than 20 employees comprised of more than one Bargaining Unit (i.e. CPAA and RSMC members), has been selected as the Health and Safety Representative. In the remaining offices, the elections are expected to be completed by the middle of September 2010. Those offices requiring an election should have already been contacted by an officer of their CPAA Branch and the respective representative of CUPW.

We appreciate, as always, the support and commitment you have given to CPAA. Thank you to everyone for your patience and cooperation while we dealt with this important issue. We are confident that the right of all employees, to have health and safety issues dealt with, has been respected throughout the process.

Stress in the Workplace

With hour reductions in the workplace, possible personality conflicts between employees, customers and increasing demands on work and family responsibilities, it is not uncommon for people to feel stress.

Learning to deal with stress allows for personal health and well-being both in and out of the workplace. Positive stress can actually motivate and encourage one to perform better. However, negative stress can harm you physically and emotionally.

Signs of serious stress can be emotional or physical. Typical symptoms are numerous and may include feeling helpless, over-reacting to small issues, being unable to concentrate, being negative, having difficulty sleeping, feeling run down or exhausted, headaches, or shortness of breath.

Everyone reacts differently to a situation. What is stressful to one person is not as stressful to another.

There are several ways to help reduce stress. You must first identify what is causing the stress before it can be reduced. Often problems at home affect your situation at work and vice versa. Be open to asking for assistance. Communicating with others you trust can help focus on what the realities are. At times, it could be simply a matter of tidying your workplace to help alleviate stress. Take tasks one step at a time instead of focussing on everything requiring your attention. Regular exercise is a positive way to reduce stress – take a walk during your lunch break or do some stretching during your coffee breaks.

Know your limits. If you require more time to perform your workload, tell your immediate supervisor.

Seek support if needed. Support can be gained from friends, co-workers, or by contacting the Employee Assistance Program at 1-866-565-4903. Take care of yourself, you are a valued employee.

(Reference: EAP Shepell-fgi, Working on Workplace Stress)

Your input is very important to us. If you have a suggestion or comment for future Health and Safety Bulletins, please contact:

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