

APPENDIX VI

Sit/Stand Workstations

The optimal work surface height for a sit/stand workplace varies depending on the nature of the primary job tasks and the height of the worker. As a result, the ideal work station is adjustable in height. When adjustability is not possible, the recommended height for an average person performing tasks involving large-size products or drawings is 44 inches above the floor. Adequate leg clearance also reduces static loading on the legs and back of the worker. For tasks that can be done while sitting or standing, the recommended work surface height for an average person is 40 inches above the floor; a lower surface may cause stooping and static loading on the back, neck, and shoulder muscles, especially for taller workers. Seated work at a standing-height workstation requires properly designed seating with adequate foot support provided by a sturdy foot rest of proper height and sufficient size to permit periodic postural shifts of the legs while working; the foot ring on a high chair or stool is not usually adequate.

For those interested in exploring a sit/stand workstation, there are several systems that have been used at the University. Information is available from Occupational Safety on request. An ergonomic assessment is strongly recommended prior to purchasing a sit/stand to ensure appropriate equipment is selected.

Although we have not found conclusive scientific study evidence that sit/stand workstations are beneficial, there seems to be growing evidence that they may provide benefits. Because we cannot cite formal study results, Occupational Safety is making formal recommendations for sit-stand workstations only when they are prescribed by a qualified medical professional such as a physician, chiropractor, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or physical therapist; in such cases, an ergonomic assessment should be performed by OSU to assist in selection of appropriate equipment prior to purchase. A copy of the prescription or medical professional's note should be provided to the OSU ergonomist at the time of assessment.

In cases where a sit/stand workstation has not been medically indicated, the workstation may be provided to the employee at the discretion of the employee's supervisor/department. An ergonomic assessment is strongly recommended to ensure that appropriate equipment is selected.

The sit/stand workstation must be obtained through the employee's department's normal purchasing process. If the equipment is obtained through Purchasing, the employee or his/her supervisor should provide a copy of the ergonomic assessment report to Purchasing when the sit/stand is ordered.

When a sit/stand workstation has been provided, a follow-up ergonomic assessment is recommended to verify that the equipment has been installed and adjusted correctly.