

It is *not* surprising that certain jobs are inherently dangerous. If you work on a [roof](#) or [scaffolding](#), you risk falling and suffering [catastrophic injuries](#). If you work as a [welder](#), you are at risk of [burns](#). If you work with electricity, the risk of [electrocution](#) is always present. And most experienced workers recognize the dangers posed by [hazardous machinery](#) in factories, warehouses, and [construction sites](#).

But it may be surprising to learn that a substantial percentage of [workers' compensation](#) claims involve injuries that occur in "ordinary" circumstances. That's because many of the features workers encounter every day can prove to be dangerous.

After decades of experience helping injured workers obtain fair compensation for injuries sustained on the job, the team at [Martin & Jones](#) has seen many cases in which ordinary workplace situations have resulted in debilitating injuries. Being aware of these potential hazards can help keep you safe. If you sustain injuries, our team is ready to assist you in obtaining the resources you need to achieve a full recovery.

## Beware of Paper Files

Although information is frequently stored in electronic format, file folders filled with paper can still be found in most offices and other work settings. Having information on paper makes it easy for many people to access and read, so paper files are still quite common.

Those seemingly innocuous files can be surprisingly hazardous, and not just because of the potential for paper cuts. To begin with, stacks of files and file boxes often pose tripping hazards. Tripping in a crowded work environment can cause an employee to bang their head, arm, or leg against a wall, desk, or other obstacle. If an employee trips and hits the floor, the trauma can lead to [back injuries](#), [broken bones](#), and damage to [the knees](#) and other parts of the body.

And tripping is far from the only risk posed by files. When files are stored on shelves, reaching for them can cause back injuries. Files stored up high can be pulled down on top of an employee, injuring the head, [neck](#), or [shoulders](#). If an employee stands on a chair or stepstool to reach files, they risk falling.

While it might be safer to store files in a file cabinet, the drawers of these cabinets often become so heavy that they cause the cabinet to tip over, potentially crushing the body parts of employees trapped underneath and leading to the possibility of [amputation](#). It may not be possible to operate a workplace effectively without paper files, but it is essential for employees to be aware of the dangers and take steps to avoid unnecessary injuries.

## Computer Files Also Cause Hazards

It might seem like the paperless office would be safer since paper files pose such a risk. However, information stored on a computer can be dangerous to access as well. Workers who spend significant time on computers suffer a range of ergonomic injuries that are often more severe than expected.

When workers are sitting with incorrect alignment or using keyboards and mice that are not at the right height, it can lead to progressive damage to employees' hands, wrists, arms, hips, and backs. Employers will sometimes take the right steps to prevent these injuries by providing ergonomic equipment. However, they often fail to take the final critical step of ensuring that employees know how to adjust the equipment to avoid damage from repetitive motions and extended work sessions.

Working at a computer can also lead to vision problems, particularly when the light from overhead fixtures or windows is too intense and causes glare. An improperly positioned monitor can strain the eyes and neck.

Finally, it is critical to ensure that desk furniture is not only adjusted correctly but also in good working order. The collapse of a chair or desk can lead to substantial injuries to the back and even damage to internal organs.

## Keep Watch While Walking

Most employees walk through the workplace regularly, either as part of their job or during breaks. And walking is a good way to improve circulation and keep parts of the body functioning optimally, so it should not be discouraged. But it can be risky, even in a seemingly safe space like the average office.

Collisions between people who are walking or between a person and a stationary object are surprisingly common. Workers can suffer injuries to the head, neck, back, and other parts of the body. In some office settings, installing two-way mirrors can improve visibility and prevent many collisions.

Slips, trips, and falls are also common. It is important to ensure that floor surfaces are not too slick and that spills or tripping hazards are addressed promptly.

## Other Unexpected Dangers in the Workplace

These are just a few examples of the potential hazards many workers face multiple times each day on the job. Some additional workplace dangers include:

- **Glass doors** – employees who are unaware or not watching closely can collide hard, causing facial injuries
- **Cords** – electric cords pose a tripping hazard, and if they become worn, they also pose a fire hazard
- **Hot substances and surfaces** – employees have suffered burns due to hot coffee in the kitchen, hot burners or heating elements, and surfaces left hot after steam cleaning
- **Decorations** – when workers decorate for a party or just to celebrate the season, they may light candles or put out sharp objects that injure workers who come in contact with them
- **Electric staplers** – not only can these devices cause puncture wounds, but they can also cause freak injuries. One worker jerked away from the sound of a loud stapler and injured her neck.

Remember that anything can ultimately prove hazardous when circumstances align a certain way. However, most employees injured during the course of employment are supposed to be covered by workers' compensation even if the employer was not negligent in providing a safe work environment.

## Get Help Finding Your Best Options for Recovery After a Workplace Injury

The workers' compensation system in North Carolina can be hard to understand, and even harder to take advantage of successfully. Workers' compensation insurers routinely deny claims that they should pay. In some cases, other remedies are available, such as a [lawsuit against third parties](#).

If you've been injured at work, it is a good idea to consult a personal injury attorney who understands how to make the most of the remedies available through workers' compensation and claims in civil court. Call us at 800-662-1234 or [contact us online](#) for a free case evaluation to find out how the [team at Martin & Jones](#) can help you reach your peak recovery.