Doors

Doors are not typically thought of as a safety hazard, we all use them multiple times every day, but they do create the potential for injury if we do not pay attention while using them. If you think about all the different ways you could be injured by a door and include the frequency you use doors on a daily basis, it is easy to see how injuries can and do happen. Some examples of door related injuries can include:

- Being struck by a door closing on you
- Being struck by a door swinging open by someone inside as you approach to open the door
- Someone opening a door swinging into the walkway striking you as you walk by
- A door closing on your hand, arm, or foot
- Being caught between a closing automatic door
- Being pinched in the hinged area of a door

The statistics agree as the National Safety Council states there are more than 300,000 door-related injuries requiring hospital emergency room treatment each year in the United States. And there are approximately 15,000 amputations related to doors annually! Most of these amputations involve children and the hinged area of the door which has a pinching pressure of up to 40 tons!

Within our regular work routine at the University, we all encounter multiple doors each day from office and classroom doors, building entrance doors, garage doors, elevator doors and vehicle doors. Unfortunately, Facilities Management employees are involved in work related incidents each year involving doors. Since 2011, FM has experienced 12 door related incidents, most commonly involving a door closing on the employee pinching a hand or finger or striking part of their body. Other incidents involve vehicle doors closing on hands and fingers. Some of these injuries are severe enough to prevent the employee from returning to their normal work duties until the injury has healed.

The following are some examples of what can be done to help prevent door related injuries:

- As you approach a door, stay out of the swing path of the door.
- Use door stops or have someone hold doors open for you when needed.
- Look through windows to see if the path is clear before opening doors, if there is no window, open the door slowly and with caution.
- Don’t walk near closed doors in the event someone opens them un-expectantly.
- Keep your hands and fingers away from the hinged area of a door while it is opening or closing.
- When working near a doorway, put up signs on the door to notify others you are in the pathway.
- Do not place part of your body in the pathway of a closing door.
- Pay attention to yours and a co-workers hand placement when closing vehicle doors.
- Never close an automated door while someone is in its path.
- Report defective doors or door hardware conditions immediately to your supervisor.