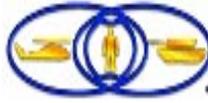


# Directorate of Public Safety News Letter

08 April, 03



## Safety Code of Ethics

- ☑ Safety is our highest priority.
- ☑ The command will lead the safety process.
- ☑ Safety is a shared responsibility of everyone in the organization.
- ☑ No known unsafe act or condition will be allowed to continue without taking immediate action to mitigate the risk.
- ☑ Safety performance is a key indicator of organizational excellence and will be integrated into all of our activities and functions.
- ☑ We will communicate safety openly with all employees, family members, and visitors.

☑ All employees will be given the knowledge and tools to perform their jobs and activities in a safe manner.

☑ We will extend our safety efforts beyond the workplace to include our homes and communities.

☑ We will continually strive to improve safety and health within the organization.

R. Vogt  
Safety Director

***New Cell phone Policy!***  
***Starting 1 May 2003 cell phone use in a government vehicle at any time, on post or off post, or a private vehicle while conducting government business, or driving on post, is restricted to a "Hands Off" policy.***

***You must either pull over or put your vehicle in park to use your cell phone, or use a no hands device of some type to use your cell phone while driving. In other words your hands must be on the***

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***steering wheel at all times while using a cell phone.***  
***DOD police will start enforcing this policy, which is consistent with GSA regulations and most DOD installations, on 1 May so be prepared!***

### **The Pledge of Allegiance**

**"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."**

History: On September 8, 1892, the "The Youth's Companion" magazine published a few words by Francis Bellamy for students to repeat on Columbus Day that year. It was reprinted on thousands of leaflets and sent out to public schools across the country. On October 12, 1892, more than 12 million children recited the Pledge of Allegiance, beginning a required school-day ritual.

At the first National Flag Conference in Washington D.C., on June 14, 1923, a change was made. For clarity, the words "the Flag of the United States" replaced "my flag". In the following years various other changes were suggested but were never formally adopted. It was not until 1942 that Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance. One year later, in June 1943, the Supreme Court ruled that school children could not be forced to recite it. Today only half of our fifty states have laws that encourage the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in class. In June of 1954 an amendment was made to add the words "under God". Then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower said "In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."



### **GOD BLESS AMERICA**

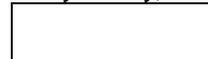
*While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,  
Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free,  
Let us all be grateful for a land so fair,  
As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer:  
Melody by Irving Berlin*

**God Bless America Land that I love  
Stand beside her, and guide her  
thru the night with a light from above.  
From the mountains, to the prairies,  
to the oceans, white with foam  
God bless America My home sweet home.  
God Bless America,  
Land that I love  
Stand beside her,  
And guide her,  
Through the night  
With the light from above,  
From the mountains,  
To the prairies,  
To the ocean,  
White with foam,  
God bless America,  
My home sweet home.  
God bless America,  
My home sweet home.**

### **Keyboard Cooties**

**What's Inside Your Keyboard Could Make You Sick**

*Becky Worley, Tech Live*



**March 26** — If you suddenly discovered that something you touch almost every day is riddled with bacteria and germs, filled with greasy food bits, skin flakes, and other nasty unmentionables, you'd probably wonder why it never gets cleaned, right?

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Knowing this might make you sick, and in more ways than one.

We're not talking about the handle of a public toilet. We're talking about the computer keyboards that are everywhere in offices and schools. Chances are, if you had a keyboard that's any bit as ordinary and similar to the one we tested here, you'd be appalled to know what's living inside of it.

## The Test Subject

At TechTV, we have one computer in particular that is shared by many people. They eat their lunch while working on it, they drink their coffee at the workstation, and who knows what else they do while typing away? It's also near the office bathrooms. In short, we thought it'd make a perfect test subject.

We packaged the keyboard and sent it to the UC Berkeley School of Public Health. Microbiologist Fenyong Liu swabbed the spacebar and cultured the keys in a plain agar dish (agar is a gelatinous material used for bacteria cultures), along with blood-laced agar that helps simulate how bacteria grows in the human body.

"Those harmful bacteria that can affect humans, they pretty much like to grow in the presence of blood, or in the blood stream," said Liu, describing the culture. "So we also included some sheep blood in this culture."

## Sandwich and a Side of Strep, Please

Two weeks later, the results showed an immense amount of growth — nasty looking stuff. The agar dishes had big, blob-like growths along with one growth that took over the entire dish.

Liu says he and his researchers were surprised at what they found, describing the findings as "gram-positive... not gram-negative." Translation: Our keyboard was free of growths including E.coli and salmonella, two agents that can cause severe sickness or death. But the cultures did come back with a large proliferation of gram-positive bacteria, which can include staphylococcus. This is the organism behind "staph" infections and an important contributor to skin wound infections. It's also the bug behind strep throat.

Without DNA testing, Liu says he can't tell us if the keyboard actually has the potential to spread these maladies. Still, the large presence of gram-positive bacteria is not a good sign, he said.

## Clean Your Desk

"The keyboard is not clean," he said. "So you are working and then you touch your nose and maybe inoculate yourself with the bacteria that causes respiratory infection. Or maybe you bite your nails or drink coffee at the same time so that you ingest the bacteria, which potentially can cause a problem."

Liu says the areas of biggest concern are the high touch zones, the places where your fingers rest and type. Now lots of gross stuff gets down in between the keys, but that's

more of a problem for the mechanics of the keyboard than your health. Crumbs and crud cause keys to stick or malfunction, so turning the keyboard upside down and gently whacking the back is a good way to de-crumbyfy.

Our tests did nothing to address the organisms that cause viral infections, but any surface that comes in contact with saliva from an infected person can transmit a virus.

Germs and bacteria exist everywhere, so it's no wonder they also exist on oft-touched objects such as computer keyboards. The message here: Clean your desk. Using anti-bacterial wipes or alcohol wipes will kill bacteria around your desk. And don't forget the phone, your computer mouse, and all other frequently touched zones.

If you're considering using alcohol, be warned: The black lettering on some keyboards start to come off if you use alcohol too often. And, just to be safe, unplug your keyboard from the back of your computer before cleaning off the keys.

As for eliminating germs, your best bet is to wash your hands often and vigorously, just like your mother always told you to do.■

## Have A Safe Month!

*R. Vogt*