

Get comfortable

Focus on office ergonomics reduces injury risks and helps improve quality of life

By Judy Kimball

As a workplace safety administrator, Judy Kimball takes advantage of every opportunity to make a difference for employees in Everett, Wash. In this *Frontiers* series that profiles employees talking about their jobs, Kimball discusses her commitment, and that of her team, to reducing ergonomic risks for office workers. PHOTO: GAIL HANUSA/BOEING

work with a dedicated team of ergonomic evaluators and we're all committed to helping employees feel better and preventing ergonomic injuries.

As a safety administrator in Everett with Environment, Health and Safety, I am responsible for the Office Safety and Office Ergonomic programs. I define ergonomics as the science of making things comfortable and efficient. Our team's goal is to provide a comfortable working environment for employees.

Boeing has thousands of office workers in Everett, and our team assists any employee requiring our services. Our more than 40 ergonomic evaluators are all volunteers who participate in this program in addition to their full-time jobs. Their commitment and dedication is amazing.

Our program has helped reduce discomfort, injuries and fatigue—and has even increased productivity. Most of all, it can help give our employees a better quality of life.

Typical ergonomic concerns for office workers are aches,

pains or strains in shoulders, backs, necks, wrists and arms. Employees seeking an ergonomic evaluation start with the self-help checklist on the Boeing Enterprise Ergonomics System on the Boeing intranet. Last year, 2,682 employees in Everett completed the checklist, and we conducted 1,500 one-on-one ergonomic evaluations.

In the course of our work, team members partner with Site Services and Supplier Management to provide equipment such as office chairs, computer peripherals and adjusted work surfaces as quickly as possible. I also work with the Disability Management and Vocational Rehabilitation organizations for more complicated cases that sometimes go beyond equipment changes.

Receiving emails from employees saying things like, "This new equipment changed my life," or "I no longer have pain in my wrist and arms," gives our team members, and me, a great feeling—knowing that we have made a difference. ■

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