

## An introduction to Health and Safety

### **What is health and Safety all about?**

Health and Safety is the prevention of people from being harmed or becoming ill by work or other activity, by taking the right precautions and providing a satisfactory work environment.

### **Do we have to contact an inspector to get information?**

No. HSE operates a confidential telephone information service (Infoline) Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm. 0845 345 0055, e-mail [hse.infoline@natbrit.com](mailto:hse.infoline@natbrit.com)

### **Do we need to have employers' liability compulsory insurance?**

It's the law if you employ anyone – and you should display the certificate.

### **Do we need to display any posters?**

Yes. The health and safety law poster if you employ anyone. Alternatively you can provide individual copies of the same information in a leaflet (Health and Safety Law: What you should know). Available from HSE Books.

## **Managing Health and Safety**

Managing health and safety is little different from managing any other aspect of an organisation. You need to do a risk assessment to find out about the risks in your meeting, put sensible measures in place to control them, and make sure they stay controlled.

What law applies?

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (risk assessment)
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977

### **Slips, trips and falls**

This concerns you if:

- You have floors which are, or can become slippery, eg when wet
- Spillage or contamination occurs. Is it dealt with quickly?
- People use unlit areas such as paths or yards in the dark
- Temporary work such as maintenance or alterations may take place. It could introduce slipping and tripping hazards such as trailing cables.
- You use floor cleaning materials anywhere. Are the right methods and materials used?

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Guidance

- Preventing Slips and Trips at Work (leaflet)
- Slips and Trips: Guidance for employers on identifying hazards and controlling risks
- [www.hse.gov.uk/slips](http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips)

### **Asbestos**

If you work with asbestos, or come into contact with it during repair and maintenance work, you are at risk. You should avoid working with asbestos if possible, but if not you must do it safely.

### **Hazardous Substances**

This concerns you if:

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- You use chemicals (including cleaning materials)

### Falls from a height

This concerns you if:

- You carry out simple maintenance or cleaning tasks that require working where you could hurt yourself if you fell.
  - Can you avoid the need to work at height?
  - Do you have the most appropriate equipment for the job?
  - Is the equipment you have well maintained and do you know how to use it safely?

### Musculoskeletal disorders

Manual handling is transporting or supporting loads by hand or using bodily force. Many people hurt their back, arms, hands or feet lifting everyday loads. Most cases can be avoided by providing suitable lifting equipment that is regularly maintained, together with relevant training on both manual handling and safe use of equipment.

This concerns you if:

- Your work includes strenuous lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, reaching or repetitive handling
- Your work involves twisting, squeezing, hammering and pounding
- You have repetitive finger, hand or arm movements that are frequent, awkward or forced.

### Display Screen Equipment

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Using a computer or other kinds of display screen equipment can give rise to back problems, RSI, or other musculoskeletal disorders. These health problems may become serious if no action is taken.

This concerns you if:

- There is regular use of display screens as a significant part of the work
- Anyone uses a keyboard, mouse or other input device
- People complain of discomfort, aches and pains

**Law:** Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)

### Noise

High levels of noise at work can cause hearing damage.

This concerns you if:

- People often have to shout to be heard
- Noisy machinery is in use
- Noise could interfere with warnings and danger signals

### Vibration

Vibration from work with power tools etc can damage the hands and arms of users. Back pain can be caused or aggravated by vibration through the seat of machines etc

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This concerns you if:

- Anyone works with hand held/guided machinery that causes vibration
- Anyone doing this work gets tingling or numb fingers/hands
- Anyone often drives off-road machinery

### **Electricity**

This concerns you if:

- Anyone carries out electrical work. Only those with appropriate technical knowledge/experience should do this.
  - Is electrical equipment in good working order? All equipment must be PAT tested annually
  - Is equipment suitable for its environment eg waterproof?

### **Work Equipment and Machinery**

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Important points include: selecting the right equipment for the job, making sure equipment is safe to use and keeping it safe through regular maintenance and inspection, and training users.

This concerns you if:

- You use ladders or other equipment for working at heights
- You have machinery of any kind
- You use hand tools in the workplace

### **Maintenance and building work**

You are responsible for contractors, service engineers, etc who do work for you. You must ensure that all people working for you have their own Public Liability Insurance.

This concerns you if:

- Anyone has to work on the roof, at a height, or on fragile materials.
- Anyone has to fault find and repair equipment and machinery.

### **Workplace Transport**

This concerns you if:

- You have vehicles in operation in your building ,carparks,etc
  - Are pedestrians separated from vehicle movements as much as possible?
  - Are traffic routes suitable to the vehicles which have to use them?
  - Disclaimer Notices for care of vehicles

### **Pressure Systems**

Pressure cookers, boilers, steam heating systems, gas cylinders and air compressors are common examples of equipment and systems containing a fluid under pressure. Incidents occur when equipment fails through poor design, incorrect filling or maintenance or when someone makes an operating mistake.

This concerns you if:

- You have any pressure systems that contain a fluid under pressure.

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- Most pressure systems have to be designed, installed, maintained and periodically examined so as to prevent danger.

### Fire and Explosion

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The wide variety of flammable substances found in the workplace ranges from the obvious eg heating fuel, petrol, paint thinners and welding gases to the less obvious eg packaging materials, dusts from wood, flour and sugar. For a fire to start, fuel air and a source of ignition are needed. Controlling these can prevent fires.

This concerns you if:

- You keep or use flammable substances
- You use or store gas in cylinders
- You work with flammable dusts
- You work with plastic foams or polyester wadding
- You spray flammable paints
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### Stress

HSE defines stress as 'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'. Stress in the job can be tackled in the same way as any other risk to health – by identifying the hazards, assessing who is at risk and the level of risk, deciding how to manage the risk and putting the plans into action. Hazards can include: lack of control over the way you do your work, work overload (or underload), lack of support from managers, conflicting or ambiguous roles, poor relationships with colleagues (inc bullying) or poor management of change.

There are individual differences in vulnerability to stress and situations outside work can also affect the ability to cope with excessive pressure at work.

### First Aid and Accident Reporting

First aid means treating minor injuries at work and giving immediate attention to more serious casualties until medical help is available.

Reporting accidents and ill health at work is a legal requirement.

There should be an **accident report logbook** on any work premises which must be used to record all incidents.

Report incidents to

Incident Contact Centre  
Caerphilly Business Park  
Caerphilly  
CF83 3GG  
Tel: 0845 300 9923

[www.riddor.gov.uk](http://www.riddor.gov.uk)

e-mail: [riddor@natbrit.com](mailto:riddor@natbrit.com)

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Important points:

- Is there at least the minimum first aid provision at the workplace? Employers must provide first aid equipment, facilities and personnel appropriate for the circumstances. The minimum would be a suitably stocked first aid box and a person appointed to take charge of first aid arrangements.

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- Is there a need for more than the minimum provision?
- Do you know which accidents and ill health cases to report, including who should do it, when and how? Employers, self-employed and people in control of work premises all have duties.

A **Health and Safety Policy** sets out the arrangements that have put in place for managing health and safety a workplace. It is a unique document that says who does what, when and how.

### **Health & Safety Policy Statement**

#### **Our General Policy is to:**

- . **Provide adequate control of the Health & Safety Risk**
- . **Provide and maintain Safe Equipment**
- . **Ensure Safe handling and use of substances**
- . **Provide information and instruction for those affected**
- . **Prevent accidents**
- . **Maintain Safe and Healthy conditions**
- . **Review and revise this policy regularly**

**NAME..... Signed.....**

**Signed Person in meeting responsible for overseeing Health & Safety**

**NAME..... Signed.....**

**Signed Meeting Clerk**

**NAME..... Signed.....**

**Signed Clerk of trustees**

**Adopted by SWAM Trustees 30 January 2011**