

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Prepared by the
Mentor
HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT	7
ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES	9
GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES	11
MANAGEMENT AND LEGAL	13
ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES	14
COMPETENCE AND TRAINING	16
CONTRACTORS	18
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	20
RISK ASSESSMENT	22
PEOPLE	25
DRIVING AT WORK	26
FIRST AID	28
LONE WORKING	30
EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS	33
ASBESTOS	34
ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS AND FIXED EQUIPMENT	36
CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH	38
MANUAL HANDLING	40
PORTABLE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES	42
WORK EQUIPMENT	44
WORKPLACE AND ENVIRONMENT	47
SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS	48
STRESS	50
VIBRATION - HAND-ARM	52
WORKPLACE WELFARE	54

Introduction

This Employee Health and Safety Handbook is based on the policies included within our health and safety management system.

The practical guidance contained within this handbook is intended for use by all those who are employed by the Company.

Health and safety is of prime importance to the Company, and we will seek to conduct our business in such a way as to avoid harm to our employees and all others who may be affected directly or indirectly by our activities.

This handbook supplements our health and safety management system documentation. It outlines the responsibilities and arrangements for ensuring your health and safety at work. The aim is to help you work safely and avoid accidents by providing a framework within which a safe method of work can be established. It is therefore important that you read the advice given here before you start work in the Company.

Accident prevention is mainly common sense, tidiness and forethought, but safety within Parker Contract Cleaning Limited does require constant vigilance and care. Remember that a little planning and thought can save a great deal of trouble and regret. Always seek expert advice when in doubt.

You are required to sign and return the declaration issued with this handbook stating that you have read the handbook and are satisfied as to your and the Company's responsibilities with respect to health and safety.

This handbook will be reviewed annually and supplementary information distributed to all employees. Suggestions for inclusion, corrections and revisions for future editions of this handbook should be sent to your line manager.

Health and Safety Policy Statement

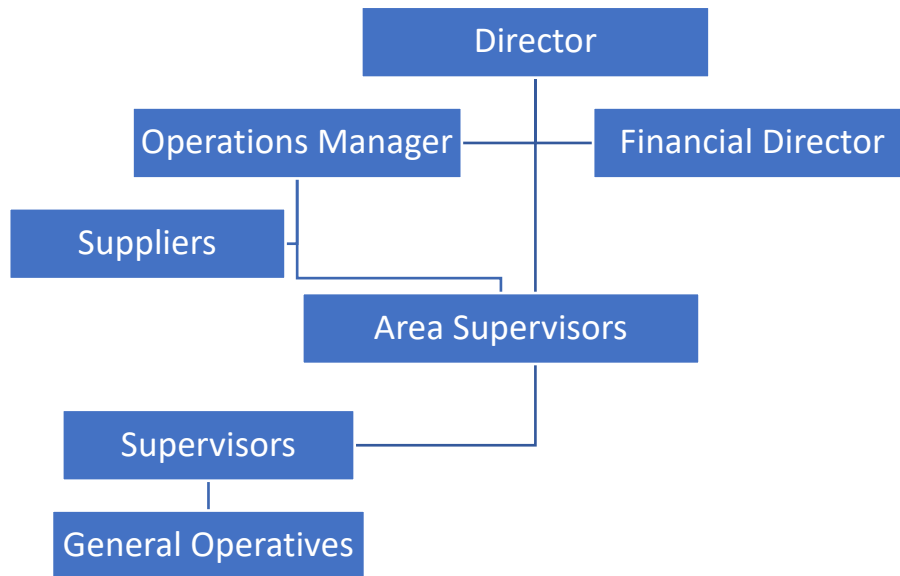
Parker Contract Cleaning Limited aims to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of our employees while they are at work and of others who may be affected by our undertakings. This general policy statement provides a commitment and intent to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

To ensure the principles of health and safety are clearly understood throughout the Company, we will be committed to:

- complying with relevant health and safety laws and regulations, voluntary programmes, collective agreements on health and safety and other requirements to which the Company subscribes;
- setting and monitoring of health and safety objectives for the Company;
- effective communication of and consultation on health and safety matters throughout the Company;
- assessing the risks to the safety and health of our employees and others who may be affected by our activities and implementing controls to minimise those risks;
- preventing work-related injuries, ill health, disease and incidents;
- providing and maintaining safe plant and equipment and implementing safe systems of work;
- the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- providing and maintaining a safe working environment with safe access, egress and welfare facilities;
- providing the necessary training to our employees and others, including temporary employees to ensure their competence with respect to health and safety;
- providing suitable and sufficient information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- continually improving the performance of our health and safety management;
- devoting the necessary resources in the form of finance, equipment, personnel and time to ensure the health and safety of our employees and seeking expert help where the necessary skills are not available within the Company;
- an annual review and when necessary the revision of this health and safety policy;
- making this policy available to relevant interested external parties, as appropriate.

Please note that a signed copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement, which demonstrates our commitment to health and safety, is available at our main business address.

Organisation and Responsibilities



General Responsibilities

The following individual post(s) have been allocated overall health and safety responsibilities within the terms of our policy:

- Phillip Parker, Director

Day to day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice and consultation with employees is delegated to:

- Matthew Lewis

Responsible Persons

It is important that health and safety standards are maintained and improved. To ensure this, where necessary specific roles within the Company have been allocated additional responsibility for health and safety. Where this responsibility is specific to a subject area, the details of the responsible person are communicated to employees in writing or verbally as required.

These Responsible Persons will also be required to monitor their areas of control as well as the performance and activities of all persons under their control to ensure that acceptable standards are maintained. They will ensure:

- The objectives and guidance outlined within our health and safety management system is fully understood and observed by persons under their control;
- Responsibilities for health and safety are clearly defined and allocated/delegated to the appropriate levels within their areas of responsibility;
- The health and safety policy statement will be brought to the attention of all employees under their control, making them aware of all hazards and the means of controlling those hazards;
- Any changes to the health and safety policy or our arrangements are brought to the attention of all persons under their control;
- That no items of machinery, equipment or substances are used unless the hazards associated with them have been identified, risk assessed and effective controls put into place.

Employees Shall:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions;
- Co-operate with management to meet the employer's legal duties and work in accordance with the Company's procedures;
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare and refrain from actions (or inactivity) which might endanger themselves, or others;
- Demonstrate their commitment to health and safety by their behaviour and co-operate in the investigation of accidents and incidents;
- Use all equipment safely, including that provided for their personal protection and report to management any defects in equipment or other dangers at once, or as soon as it is safe to do so;
- Comply with all safety instructions or procedures and not undertake any tasks that they are not trained and authorised for.

Health and Safety Adviser:

In line with current legislation we have appointed Gaynor Parker to act as our in-house health and safety advisor under Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

Health and Safety Assistance:

To assist us in our undertaking we have appointed NatWest Mentor as Health and Safety Consultants to provide competent advice and guidance.

Issue 2

05112012

Management and Legal

Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses

Introduction

An accident is defined as an unplanned, unexpected and undesired event which occurs suddenly and causes injury or loss, and a near miss is an unplanned event that has the potential to cause injury or loss.

Key Facts

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) during 2010/2011:

- 171 people were killed at work
- 144,000 major or over 3-day injuries reported to the HSE
- An estimated 1.2 million people who worked in 2010/11 report suffering from a work-related illness, of which 495 000 were new cases which started in the year.

Hints and Tips

Ensure you understand your organisation's health and safety policy and objectives.

Know the emergency arrangements of your organisation.

Ensure you understand the control measures specified in the organisation's procedures and risk assessments.

Ensure you have received suitable information, instruction and training in the task you are carrying out.

Ensure you wear all personal protective equipment that is specified for the task you are to carry out.



Do

- Observe the safe system of work for the task.
- Report any accidents, incidents and near misses.
- Make sure you know where the accident book is.
- Make sure you know the arrangements for emergencies and first aid.
- Use equipment according to manufacturers' instructions.



Don't

- Remove guards when using equipment.
- Leave actions for another person to carry out.
- Make unauthorised modifications to equipment or use equipment with unauthorised modifications.
- Deviate from approved safe system of work.

Issue 2

14052012

Competence and Training

Introduction

Competency and training should be related to functions, jobs or processes undertaken in the workplace. Clear standards should be developed, as this will allow those carrying out the work, as well as those supervising to know whether they possess the necessary competency. Training helps people acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to make them competent in the health and safety aspects of their work.

Key Facts

The Health and Safety Executive states that: 'for a person to be competent, they need qualifications, experience, and qualities appropriate to their duties.' In reality, only an assessment of the individual can demonstrate competence.

Competence does not solely depend on any particular skills, training or qualifications.

It is universally acknowledged that competence is critical in ensuring suitable health and safety standards are maintained.

Competent employees are expected to act in a manner that is reasonable depending on their levels of knowledge, skills and training.

Hints and Tips

Co-operate with your employer in developing a personal development plan that fits your training needs and requirements.

Remember that competence is a combination of things such as technical training, attitudes and behaviours as well as experience and knowledge of the equipment or processes.

Do not operate machinery or attempt anything that you do not have the competence, skills or abilities to do or if you have not been trained.

Training does not have to be delivered in a 'classroom' setting with a teacher standing up front. A lot of vocational training, also known as on-the-job training, can be carried out in the workplace as work is actually being undertaken.



Do

- Ensure that you have a personal development plan in place for your role.
- Bring to your employers attention, any areas you feel where you lack knowledge or skill.
- Notify your Supervisor or Line Manager if you witness a lack of competence or training somewhere within your workplace.



Don't

- Think that once trained, you may never require further training in a particular subject or discipline.
- Assume that having received training on one piece of equipment or particular process, you are then competent to do everything within your workplace.

Contractors

Introduction

When contractors are engaged to work on others premises, the main contractor has obligations to plan, monitor and control their work to ensure the safety of everyone who might be affected by their work. The organisations who are contracted also have similar obligations, so it should be the main contractors policy to work closely with them all.

Key Facts

Work undertaken for a client by a contractor is usually covered by a civil contract.

Health and safety requirements and responsibilities should be included in this contract.

Health and Safety responsibilities cannot be transferred to another party.

All parties have health and safety duties.

The main contractor should check that all contractors are competent to carry out their duties safely.

All contractors must have adequate insurances in place.

Hints and Tips

Co-operate and communicate with all contractors.

Ensure you make other contractors aware of any risks that they may not know about.

If you are a supervisor or manager, you should carry out regular inspections on all contractors.

Ensure your work does not affect the safety and wellbeing of any other contractors on site.



Do

- Work alongside contractors.
- Report any unsafe behaviour to your manager.
- Know which contractors are authorised to be on site.
- Know the approximate timescales of work.



Don't

- Assume they are competent.
- Be afraid to question someone if you think they're unauthorised.
- Ignore their risk assessments and safety procedures - these affect you too.

Emergency Procedures

Introduction

An event can be considered to be an emergency if it requires a rapid and variable response in order to minimise loss e.g. explosions, chemical spills, security/terrorist threats etc.

Key Facts

Fire is not included in these procedures.

All potential emergency situations should be considered - consider the worse case scenario for each potential event.

Loss can be minimised by taking a practical approach.

The current terrorism level for the UK is severe which means a terrorist attack is highly likely.

In November 2009, flooding and storms hit Cumbria resulting in cost of around £1.6M for Lake District National Park alone.

Hints and Tips

Being aware of the emergency procedures will help you respond to emergencies.

Know the control measures.

Ensure you have adequate instruction, information and training to deal with emergency procedures, especially where you have a key role.

Get involved in preparation of emergency procedures.



Do

- Ensure you read and understand the necessary risk assessments.
- Follow good working practises.
- Know the potential consequences of emergencies.
- Try and remain calm if an emergency arises.



Don't

- Assume it can't happen to you or to your employer.
- Panic if emergency situations arise.
- Do anything which could affect the health and wellbeing of yourself or anyone else.

Risk Assessment

Introduction

A risk assessment is the process of identifying the risks from an activity or workplace and assessing the potential impact of each risk i.e. what could go wrong, as well as identifying possible control measures that would reduce or eliminate the risk.

Key Facts

Risk assessments are a legal requirement as per the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

A good risk assessment should help prevent accidents and ill health and therefore could save lives and reduce the likelihood of compensation claims or legal action.

You have a duty to comply with your employers Risk Assessment.

Risk Assessments only need to be recorded if there are five or more employees although, you should always be aware of the hazards and risk around you.

Hints and Tips

Ensure you are aware and fully understand any Risk Assessments that are relevant to your duties at work and any tasks that you undertake.

There should be a Risk Assessment carried out for all work equipment and work activities. Ensure that you know what control measures are in place to protect you.

Co-operate with your employer when they are carrying out and implementing Risk Assessments.



Do

- Get involved in the Risk Assessment process.
- Implement the control measures stated in the Risk Assessment e.g. Wear PPE.
- Report any Risks or Hazards which have gone unreported.
- Inform your employer if the process steps are different from that on the risk assessment.



Don't

- Carry out work unless an adequate Risk Assessment has been carried out.
- Assume your employer has considered all the risks.
- Ignore the Risk Assessment - it exists for a reason.
- Alter the Risk assessment without notifying your manager and team.

People



Driving at Work

Introduction

Risks associated with driving will always be present. Although these cannot be completely controlled an employer has a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to manage these risks, as they would in a workplace, down to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

Key Facts

Over 2,500 people die each year in road accidents. It is believed that around 1,000 of those casualties, are at work when they have their accidents.

Business drivers are far more likely to be involved in accidents than people driving privately.

A number of people are struck by moving vehicles on motorway hard shoulders each year, either because they stayed inside their vehicle whilst awaiting assistance or remaining close to their vehicle. This results in around 250 deaths and major injuries each year.

Hints and Tips

Plan journeys in advance. Do not be tempted to adjust satellite navigation systems (sat-navs) whilst driving.

If there is a risk of getting stranded during periods of poor weather, either postpone your journey if possible or ensure you carry additional provisions such as water, snack foods, a blanket and a torch.

If you do breakdown on a motorway, pull your vehicle as far to the left on the hard shoulder as possible and angle your wheels towards the verge. Put your hazard warning lights on and side lights if visibility is poor. Get everyone out of your vehicle safely (via the nearside doors if you can) and stand as far away as possible, even if that means climbing over a crash barrier or standing in the rain.



Do

- Ensure you hold relevant levels of insurance for the type of driving you are doing.
- Carry out daily levels checks.
- Plan your journey and leave yourself plenty of time.
- Remain courteous to other road users at all times.



Don't

- Drive for more than 2 hours without taking a short break.
- Drive if under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Allow yourself to be provoked into losing your temper by other motorists.
- Use your handheld mobile phone whilst driving.

First Aid

Introduction

First aid is the care given before emergency medical help arrives, it can often mean the difference between life and death.

Key Facts

A first aider is someone who has undertaken training and has a qualification that the Health and Safety Executive approves.

An appointed person is the person who takes charge when someone is injured or falls ill, including calling an ambulance if required but does not give first aid treatment.

First aid can save lives and prevent minor incidents from becoming major incidents.

First aid at work covers the arrangements your employer must make to ensure this happens.

It does not matter whether the injury or the illness is caused by work, first aid cover is still required.

Hints and Tips

If asked to be a first aider, ensure that you are comfortable with this and are given the appropriate training.

Your employer will ensure there are sufficient first aid kits in the premises.

All mobile workers should have access to first aid kits.

Familiarise yourself with first aid signage and location of first aid kits.



Do

- Know who your first aiders are and where they are located.
- Know how to contact the first aider.
- Ensure that any first aid situation is reported to first aider.



Don't

- Try to give someone first aid if you have not had any training.
- Remove anything from the first aid kit without permission from first aider.
- Move first aid kits.
- Panic if faced with first aid situation, remain calm and contact first aider.

Issue 2

14052012

Lone Working

Introduction

The Health and Safety Executive identifies Lone Working as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. These means that many businesses, including ours will have people working for them classed as 'Lone Workers'.

Key Facts

Just by the nature of them being lone workers, does not increase the risks to employees and consequently, lone working in itself is not against the law. However, the law requires employers and others to think about and deal with any health and safety risks before anyone works alone.

It is the employer's duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary.

As an Employee, you have responsibilities to take reasonable care of yourself and other people affected by your work activities and to co-operate with your employer in helping them to meet their own legal obligations.

Hints and Tips

If your work does not base you in one particular place each day, always prepare a daily schedule so that someone knows where you are and what you are doing.

Pre-determine a contact strategy with a designated 'contact person' and ensure they are aware of what to do if they cannot get in touch with you.

If you have any medical conditions which might cause black-outs, fainting, dizzy spells etc, notify your Supervisor or Line Manager immediately. It would be advisable to check with your Doctor or other healthcare professional whether lone working was suitable given your medical condition.



Do

- Make sure someone knows what work you are doing and any travel plans you might have
- Feel comfortable leaving any situation you consider threatening or intimidating
- Ensure you are sufficiently experienced and fully understand the risks and precautions.



Don't

- Take un-necessary risks when you are working alone.
- Keep quiet about any issues you think might compromise your safety - always discuss issues with your Supervisor or Line Manager.

Equipment and Materials

Asbestos

Introduction

Asbestos and asbestos containing materials were used in the construction industry for many years primarily as a deterrent to the spread of fire or for its insulation properties. It is the largest single cause of work-related fatal disease and ill-health in Great Britain.

Key Facts

Thousands of people die every year because they have inhaled asbestos many years previously.

This can cause the following diseases:

- Mesothelioma
- Asbestosis
- Asbestos related lung cancer
- Diffuse pleural thickening.

Following exposure to asbestos these diseases may take up to 40 years to present themselves and cause symptoms.

There were 2,156 deaths from Mesothelioma in 2007.

It is estimated that around 1,400 deaths from asbestos related lung cancer occurred in 2007.

Smokers are more at risk from asbestos disease.

Hints and Tips

Know your companies policy on asbestos and where/if asbestos is located in your premises.

What actions you need to take should your work expose you to asbestos.

Be aware: asbestos breaks into long fibres. They can get lodged/become embedded in your lungs causing the diseases already listed.

Work, even sanding or minor drilling of certain types of asbestos has to be carried out by a licensed contractor.

Work on any asbestos must not take place unless a suitable risk assessment and method statement is prepared and appropriate precautions adopted.

If you are at risk of asbestos exposure or encountering asbestos in the workplace, you **MUST** receive asbestos awareness training.



Do

- Understand what your company's procedures are in managing risks from asbestos.
- Ensure that you have had an appropriate training session on asbestos.
- Follow any safe system of work adopted for work with asbestos.
- Wear all appropriate PPE for work with asbestos.



Don't

- Touch or disturb any materials if you suspect they are or contain asbestos.
- Place any contaminated clothing into general waste.
- Deviate from safe system of work.
- Continue working if you suspect you have disturbed some asbestos fibres.

Electrical Installations and Fixed Equipment

Introduction

Electricity is invisible and silent, but it can easily be a killer if mis-used. A mild electric shock could be enough to throw you off balance and make you fall from a height.

Key Facts

Around 1,000 electrical accidents at work are reported to HSE each year and about 25 people die of their injuries.

The main hazards are:

- Contact with live parts causing shock and burns
- Faults which could cause fires
- Fire or explosion where electricity could be the source of ignition in a potentially inflammable or explosive atmosphere.

The 17th Edition of the Wiring Regulations came into force in 2008. These regulations are also published as British Standard BS7671.

All electrical equipment and installations must be regularly tested, inspected and maintained regularly.

Hints and Tips

Where possible, use 110V supply and/or equipment. Where this is not possible, use a Residual Current Device (RCD).

Even low level voltages can be dangerous.

Remember that electricity can arc i.e. "jump" across considerable distances.

Even if working live can be justified, many precautions are needed to make sure that the risk is reduced. Ensure your employer has taken adequate measures before agreeing to work on live electricity.



Do

- Use safe isolation procedures at all times
- Use adequate signage when working with electricity
- Assume cables are present when digging in the street
- Inspect electrical equipment before use
- Test and certificate the circuit on completion of work.



Don't

- Work on live electricity unless it is unavoidable
- Assume the electricity is 'dead'
- Do the job unless you're trained and competent to do so
- Forget water and electricity don't mix.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

Introduction

Some substances used in the workplace may be hazardous to health, such as chemicals, fumes, dusts, or bacteria.

Key Facts

Hazardous substances cause harm by getting into our bodies by either:

- inhalation
- skin absorption
- ingestion
- injection.

Good control measures will match the nature of the exposure risk, for example good ventilation will reduce risk of inhalation.

Some substances will re-act if mixed together so this should be avoided in use and storage.

All hazardous substances will have an information sheet called a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) which provides key facts about each substance.

Your employer should complete Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) risk assessments on all hazardous substances.

Hints and Tips

Only use the smallest amount required of any substances - the more you use the bigger the risk.

Replace lids and tops on all hazardous substances and store them effectively.

Ensure that areas in which you are using substances are well ventilated.

Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that has been identified to protect you from exposure to substances.

Make sure all spillages are cleared up at the earliest opportunity and reported to the relevant people.



Do

- Keep hazardous substances in a secure, well-ventilated store or metal cabinet.
- Make sure chemicals are kept apart in the designated stores.
- Label all containers and clearly identify hazards, such as irritant, corrosive, toxic etc.
- Wear appropriate clothing when handling hazardous substances.



Don't

- Use chemicals from unmarked containers or decant them into other containers.
- Eat, drink or smoke near hazardous substances.

Manual Handling

Introduction

Manual handling operations means any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force.

Key Facts

Bad backs affect people of all ages.

Poor handling techniques when you are young will contribute to problems in later life.

Once you damage your back, you are three times more likely to suffer injury again.

Musculo-skeletal disorders arising from work injuries are estimated to cost the economy around £3 billion per annum and account for 30 million lost working days.

Smokers are more likely to injure their backs than non-smokers.

Hints and Tips

Follow appropriate systems of work laid down for your safety.

Make proper use of equipment provided for your safety.

Co-operate with your employer on health and safety matters.

Inform your employer if you identify any hazardous handling activities.

Ensure that any lifting activities you get involved in do not put others at risk.



Do

- Avoid or reduce manual handling activities where possible.
- Use mechanical aids where provided.
- Tell your employer if you have any history of back trouble.
- Make sure your travel route is clear before lifting any objects.



Don't

- Attempt to lift an object without assessing its weight first.
- Carry objects over long distances.
- Stoop when picking anything up - bend your knees.

Portable Electrical Appliances

Introduction

Generally, appliances that have a lead or cable and a plug and which are normally moved around or are easily movable from place to place are classified as portable electrical appliances. This description also incorporates electrical equipment that could be moved, although remains static for the most part, such as photocopiers, desktop computers etc.

Key Facts

The Health and Safety Executive reports around 1000 shocks or burns from electricity each year.

Failure to maintain electrical appliances increases the likelihood of electric shock, fire or serious injury.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT tests) should be carried out regularly. How often these tests are carried out depends on the conditions that the equipment is used in and how frequently it is moved around.

Appliances should be earthed and insulated before use.

Hints and Tips

Look for evidence of a recent PAT test, this may be a sticker marked with a date.

Remember to wear the appropriate PPE when using power tools.

Ensure that the power supply is fitted with an earth-leakage circuit breaker (ELCB) or a residual-current device (RCD).

Don't bring your own equipment into work unless pre-arranged with your employer, they need to check that it is safe to use.

Formal visual checks should be carried out by a competent person on a regular basis.



Do

- Carry out visual checks before using any equipment.
- Let your supervisor know if you find any equipment that needs to be repaired.
- Use the right equipment for the job.
- Store your equipment in the correct way, to minimise damage.



Don't

- Use equipment that has frayed cables, scorch marks or damaged casings.
- Assume that PAT tests should be carried out annually, it may be more frequently for some equipment.
- Forget that water and electricity don't mix!

Work Equipment

Introduction

Work equipment includes any machinery, appliance or tool that is used to carry out a task. Examples include lifting equipment, machinery, hand tools, protective equipment and computer hardware.

Key Facts

The only one of our senses that can detect electricity is touch, and coming into contact with live electricity can result in a variety of experiences, from a mild tingle to severe injury or even death.

A set of regulations known as the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 applies to work equipment in the workplace. These are often referred to as PUWER.

Removing or bypassing guards installed for your safety is a common cause of injury with work equipment.

Hints and Tips

Never take short cuts by using equipment inappropriately, like using a screwdriver instead of a chisel.

Consider the risks to other people working near you or to members of the public if you work outside.

If an electrical machine you are working on develops a fault, isolate the machine (switch it off), then report the matter to your supervisor or line manager.

Do not attempt or carry out maintenance activities unless you are trained and authorised to do so.



Do

- Ensure the equipment is suitable for the task.
- Carry out visual inspections before using any equipment.
- Report any damage or defects to equipment.
- Follow all safety procedures.
- Request further training if you feel inadequately experienced to operate the equipment.



Don't

- Use equipment unless you are adequately trained, experienced and authorised to do so.
- Ignore safety warnings. They are there for a reason.
- Use equipment if it is damaged or appears to be unsafe.

Workplace and Environment



Slips, Trips and Falls

Introduction

Slips, Trips and Falls are an unfortunate occurrence of day-to-day life and often seen as humorous events, but this is far from the truth. By taking a few simple precautions, you can significantly reduce the risks.

Key Facts

More than 14,000 workers suffered major injury as a result of a slip, trip or fall during 2008/2009.

More than a third of all major injuries reported each year are caused as a result of a slip, trip or fall (the single most common cause of injuries at work). They also account for more than half of all reported injuries to members of the public.

Anyone at work can help to reduce slip, trip and fall hazards through good health and safety arrangements. Effective solutions are often simple, cheap and can lead to other benefits.

Hints and Tips

Make sure you know what to do with spillages.

Make sure that leaks are reported as soon as identified.

Play your part in cleaning regimes and schedules.

Keep your work area tidy.

Choose appropriate footwear for the tasks you are undertaking or the area in which you are working.

Check that floor surfaces are in good condition and report defects.



Do

- Walk on designated walking routes if these are available.
- Wear footwear appropriate to the work you are carrying out.
- Report defects in floor surfaces to your Supervisor immediately.
- Keep work areas tidy and free from slip and trip hazards.



Don't

- Walk on uneven surfaces or where there have been fluid spills.
- Walk in poorly lit areas.
- Expect others to report defects - it is everyone's responsibility.

Stress

Introduction

Stress is defined as 'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'. Many outward signs of stress should be readily noticeable but as people react differently to different pressures, indications will vary between different people.

Key Facts

In 2008/2009, an estimated 415,000 individuals in Britain who worked in the last year believed that they were experiencing work-related stress at a level that was making them ill (prevalence), according to the Labour Force Survey.

Stress can cause changes in those experiencing it. In some cases there are clear signs that people are experiencing stress at work and if these can be identified early, action can be taken before the pressure becomes a problem. This may make it easier to reduce and eliminate the causes.

Your line manager has a duty to ensure that work does not make you ill and will understand how to spot the signs of stress.

Hints and Tips

If you think you are suffering from stress, talk to your line manager or HR department in the first instance and then speak with your GP.

Try to avoid 'eating on the run' or avoiding meals altogether.

Taking care of yourself physically will enable you to deal with stress-related problems more efficiently. A balanced diet, moderate exercise and adequate sleep will all help.

Do not be embarrassed to seek professional help.



Do

- Take care of yourself physically by taking regular exercise, maintaining a balanced diet and getting sufficient sleep.
- Report any concerns you have to your line manager or HR department.
- Ensure you behave responsibly to yourself and others to minimise pressures.



Don't

- Be afraid to say no to unrealistic demands on your time.
- Ignore warnings of ill-health. Your GP will be familiar with the warning signs and can deal with them early.
- Tolerate bullying or harassment.

Vibration - Hand-Arm

Introduction

The use of hand-held power tools or equipment that is guided by hand can often expose the user to vibration transmitted from the equipment and into the user's hands and arms. Frequent exposure to high levels of vibration can cause permanent injury.

Key Facts

Hand arm vibration can cause a range of conditions collectively known as hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS), as well as specific diseases such as carpal tunnel syndrome.

Whilst it is not exactly clear how vibration causes the condition, it is probably due to slight but repeated injury to the small nerves and blood vessels in the fingers. Over time these may gradually lose some of their function and cause symptoms.

HAVS affects the nerves, blood vessels, muscles and joints of the hand, wrist and arm. It is a condition that can become severely disabling if ignored.

Hints and Tips

Ask to use suitable low vibration tools wherever possible.

Check tools before using them to make sure they have been properly maintained and repaired to avoid any increased vibration caused by faults or general wear and tear.

Rather than work continually with vibrating tools, consider work rotation - changing the type of work you do periodically before returning to the original tool.

Touching cold tools will increase the problem so think about storing tools so that they do not have very cold handles.

Encourage good blood circulation by keeping warm and dry, giving up or cutting down on smoking because this reduces blood flow; and massaging and exercising your fingers during work breaks.



Do

- Hold tools as loosely as possible, and in varying positions.
- Take regular breaks of at least 10 minutes away from the tool. Short bursts of work are better than long periods of work without a break.
- Use tools correctly, and use the right tool for the job.



Don't

- Use tools that are poorly maintained.
- Ignore symptoms of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome - contact your GP but also advise your Supervisor or Line Manager.
- Use tools that you know make the problems worse.

Workplace Welfare

Introduction

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations cover a wide range of basic health, safety and welfare issues for work in or near buildings. They apply to most workplaces and detail minimum standards for ensuring a suitable working environment that is safe and without hazards to health.

Key Facts

Most workplaces have broadly similar hazards and welfare arrangements.

There should be fresh, clean air circulating, via windows or by properly maintained mechanical means. Windows should be able to be opened safely.

For work that is mainly at a desk the temperature should be 16°C or more. There is currently no maximum workplace temperature, although in most cases this will be about 25°C.

A suitable supply of drinking water should be provided.

Adequate toilets should be provided for the number of employees. Washing facilities should have running water and soap.

Hints and Tips

Rest areas should be readily accessible, clean and have suitable surfaces to place food upon. Seats should be provided for use during rest breaks.

Pregnant women and nursing mothers should have suitable rest facilities.

Workstations must have sufficient surrounding space and workers must be able to leave workstations swiftly if needed. Seating should be suitable for each worker and a footrest provided if needed.

Flooring should be suitable and not uneven or slippery.

Sufficient lighting should be provided, natural light where possible. Emergency lighting should be provided if an artificial light source could fail.



Do

- Raise any concerns about workplace facilities with your supervisor.
- Clean as you go, and keep facilities and your workstation clean and tidy.
- Ensure that equipment is kept in good repair and maintained regularly.



Don't

- Obstruct traffic routes.
- Leave any waste materials lying around, put them in the appropriate place.
- Forget to wash your hands before eating or drinking, especially if you work in dusty or oily environments.