



General Safety in the Workplace

Housekeeping

A tidy place of work is a safe place of work. It is important to plan the workplace prior to work commencing. This prevents unnecessary housekeeping problems throughout the contract. Consideration should be given to:

- Rubbish removal and storage;
- Delivery of products to site;
- Safe work areas;
- Location of site facilities;
- Storage areas;
- Access and egress to site for staff, and
- A rigid policy on denailing timber.

There are numerous other areas that should be considered during planning to ensure good housekeeping throughout the contract.

Working on, or adjacent to, a Public Place

Where construction work is being carried out consideration must be given to the public that have lawful access to, or adjacent to, the place of work. Provisions must be in place to protect these people from any hazards created in the place of work.

This can be achieved by:

- Warning signs;
- Illumination of hazard areas;
- Walkway gantries with protective roofing;
- Fencing, barriers;
- High-visibility clothing; and
- Traffic controllers, traffic lights etc.

Powder-Powered Tools

Powder-powered tools are required to have a certificate issued by an authorised gunsmith every 6 months. Users of powder-powered tools are required to hold a certificate of competence for the type of tool they are using. This is issued by the importer/manufacturer of the tool i.e. Ramset, Reid, Hilti etc. Storage and security of the tool and cartridges must be considered at all times.

Heights of More Than 3 Metres

Regulation 21 of the Health and Safety in Employment Regulations 1995 requires every employer to take all practicable steps to ensure that where any employee may fall more than 3 metres, means are provided to prevent the employee from falling, and any means so provided is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be used.

Harness and safety lines, perimeter guardrails, roof ladders, scaffolding are all acceptable ways of ensuring safety from falls. Perimeters of work areas and floor openings need to be assessed as to what type of fall protection is required.

Brittle roofing, skylights and translucent sheeting create a danger to persons working on roofing or using the roof for access and egress. Painters and maintenance staff are particularly vulnerable to this hazard.

Electricity

Electricity can kill. DO NOT TAKE CHANCES.

Hazard management should include a section on what controls are needed in the management of site electrical distribution and protection needed and the maintenance and use of electrical tools used in the

place of work. As a practical step, all testing and tagging of portable electrical equipment should comply with AS/NZS 3012: 1995 section 3: Inspection and testing. Electric leads are also covered in the standard.

Keep electric leads suspended out of harm's way. This will ensure no damage occurs to the lead and prevents the hazard of water and electricity coming into contact with each other. Only certificated electricians can repair electrical equipment.

Safety of Employees

Section 6 of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 requires employers to provide and maintain a safe working environment and to provide and maintain facilities for the safety and health of employees while they are at work.

An emergency procedure plan should be in place and all employees made aware of the plan.

All employees must be made aware of, and trained in the management of, identified hazards.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be available when using chemicals. READ THE SHEETS BEFORE YOU USE THE PRODUCT. This will ensure you take the necessary precautions and ensure the safety of the persons using the product. Labels also provide information about how to use chemicals safely.

Accidents

Section 25 of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 requires employers to keep and maintain a register of accidents and serious harm. All accidents and serious harm must be notified to OSH as soon as possible after the accident. The accident scene must not be disturbed until it is cleared by an OSH inspector.

Further Information

Should you require any assistance with any health and safety issues, please contact your nearest branch of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).