

Facilities Management Sub-Committee

CPD Toolbox: Volume 2

Office Safety

December, 2016

Office Safety

Introduction

Serious accidents and injuries occur on a regular basis in offices everywhere.

- **Office Workers:**
 - *are injured by falls, electric shock, cuts and bruises from office tools and furniture and from manual handling*
 - *way develop ill-health from repetitive work such as keyboard and poor workstation set-up*



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Slips / Trips – Controlling the Risks

- Cables (mains, telephone or data) should not be placed across walkways or through foot wells under desks
- Briefcases, handbags and other personal items should be stored where no one will fall over them
- Filing cabinets and desks:
 - *keep drawers shut except when filing or retrieving a document*



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Stairs – Controlling the Risks

- Stairs
 - *take one step at a time when ascending / descending*
 - *don't load your arms so full of materials that you can't see*
 - *keep one hand on the handrail*



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Floors – Controlling the Risk

- Carpet tiles, mats etc
 - *refit, repair or replace damaged carpet tiles*
 - *straighten mats immediately if rucked up*
- Spills
 - *clean up immediately*



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Falls – Controlling the Risk

- Do not use makeshift scaffolds when reaching for something overhead
 - *take the time to get a stepladder or step stool*



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Cuts / Puncture Wounds – Controlling the Risks

- Store scissors, paper knives and letter openers separately from other items or in safe containers
- Keep hands and fingers clear of paper inlet on shredders
- Switch shredders off before trying to clear blockages
- Exercise care when using guillotines



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Manual Handling – Controlling the Risks

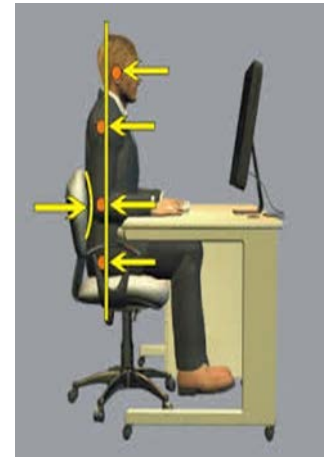
- Minimise manual handling
 - *use mechanical aids where possible*
 - *get assistance for heavy or awkward loads*
- Use correct manual handling techniques
- Avoid over reaching / stretching



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Display Screen Equipment (DSE) – Controlling the Risks

- DSE use does not directly cause health problems, but incorrect set-up or your posture can cause pain in your eyes, neck, back and hands
- Avoid these by ensuring that your workstation is set up properly
- Take regular short breaks



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Fire – Controlling the Risks

- Store combustible materials safely
- Smoke only in safe places
 - *fully extinguish every cigarette*
- Keep electrical equipment, cables etc in good condition
- Keep fire doors closed



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Electricity – Controlling the Risks

- Repair or replace equipment immediately if:
 - *coloured wires are showing*
 - *damage to plugs, flexes or equipment*
 - *equipment stops intermittently*
- Avoid / limit use of multi-way adaptors
- Ensure only competent persons make repairs



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Hygiene – Controlling the Risks

- Keep toilets and kitchens clean
- Leave them in the condition you'd like to find them in
- Don't put anything flush / pour anything that will block pipes



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Housekeeping – Controlling the Risks

- Very cheap and effective means of controlling risks
- The most likely issues to be influenced by good housekeeping include:
 - *fire*
 - *slips, trips and falls*
- Ensure “a place for everything and everything in place”
- Clean as you go



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Conclusion

- Don't dismiss potential hazards as trivial because an office environment is seen as "low risk"– some cause serious injuries
- Watch out for unsafe conditions and **REPORT THEM!!**
- For further information please view on-line leaflets at HSE /HSA websites