



Health & Safety at Work Handbook



2011-12 EDITION

INTRODUCTION

The need for safety awareness in business cannot be over emphasised. Nationally about 220 people are killed in accidents at work each year and hundreds and thousands are injured or suffer ill health as a result of their work. Many of these injuries occur in small businesses.

Many accidents can be prevented by an awareness of the risks and by taking simple commonsense precautions. The Food and Health & Safety Team is committed to working with businesses to achieve healthy and safe workplaces for people who work in or visit businesses in Dundee.

This handbook provides an outline of health and safety at work. It is intended to help small businesses in Dundee provide safe and healthy workplaces and comply with the law.

The handbook is written avoiding jargon as far as possible. Because of this it is not a legal document and does not describe the law in detail. Any references are examples of general points but there may be other standards that apply to your business.

Further information is available from the sources outlined in each section but if you need more help or guidance see section 25 "Getting more help" at the end of this booklet.

1) HEALTH & SAFETY LAWS

The Health & Safety at Work Etc Act 1974 is the main law. It covers all work premises and everyone at work. It says that you as an employer, or self employed person must look after yourself, everyone working for you and anyone who could be affected by what you do - including the public.

There are other laws and regulations. Some of these are referred to in this booklet. You must find out which laws apply to you - you can ask your trade federation, chamber of commerce or your local health and safety inspector (see section 25 at the end of this booklet).

You have legal responsibilities for the safety of people in relation to the following:-

- Working procedures must be safe and healthy.
- The workplace must be safe, clean and healthy.
- Machines must be safe to use.
- Health risks must be properly controlled.
- Transport must be controlled, including fork lift trucks.
- Manual lifting/handling must be reduced as much as possible.
- Make sure people don't climb in the workplace and, if they have to, that they take the right safety precautions.
- Make sure that the windows in your building can be cleaned safely.
- If the workplace is noisy find out how serious it is and if necessary do something about it.
- If you use computers make sure that you avoid the risks by having good equipment, a well designed workplace and careful design of jobs.
- Maintain electrical and gas appliances in a safe condition.
- Plan for things that might go wrong e.g. fires or accidents.

The remaining chapters in this book will give you simple guidance on what you need to do to protect people.

Further reading:

Essentials of Health and Safety at Work

INDG259

An Introduction to Health and Safety

HSC 13

Health and Safety Regulation a Short Guide

More on Getting Started can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/

PLEASE NOTE: Most publications and all free leaflets in multiple languages can be downloaded from the HSE's website, see section 25 for details of where to get these publications and leaflets.

2) HEALTH & SAFETY INSPECTORS

Health and safety laws in Dundee are enforced by an inspector from Dundee City Council or the Health and Safety Executive. Check the table in section 25 to find out which is your enforcing authority.

The enforcing authorities do more than just enforce the law. Much of their activities involve giving advice to people to help them meet the legal standards.

Inspectors do have a wide range of powers which include right of entry to your premises, the right to talk to your employees and make investigations. They have the right to take photographs and make copies of documents. They also have the right to take away equipment for examination or as evidence.

Inspectors may visit your business without prior notice but you are entitled to see their identification before letting them in. The inspector will treat you courteously and fairly. Normally their duties are carried out informally and with the co-operation of employers.

The inspector will focus on various issues whilst they are with you, however, they will only discuss the topics that apply to your business. The inspectors will also discuss any specific trade issues (e.g. beauty practices, tyre changing and beer line cleaning) and point out any other issues which they see as they go round. The inspection will not cover all activities or all areas of your business. The responsibility to look at ALL areas remains yours but the inspector will advise you and point you to appropriate sources of information to assist you to do this. If there is a serious problem, inspectors may issue notices requiring you to make improvements within a fixed period of time. They may also issue notices to stop a process or the use of dangerous equipment if there is a risk of serious injury to people.

If you receive a notice you have the right to appeal to an Employment Tribunal.

Inspectors from the local authority have the ability to take firm action, including case submission to the Procurator Fiscal, against those who flaunt the law or act irresponsibly but, this would normally only be considered as a last resort or where the offence is serious. They will take into account your

attitude and safety record. Fines for Health and Safety offences can be up to £20,000 per offence.

If you are not satisfied with the way you have been treated you can take the matter up with the inspector or the inspector's manager.

Further reading:

HSC 14 What to expect when a health and safety inspector calls

More on Health and Safety Enforcement can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/index.htm

3) SAFETY DOCUMENTS

The following is a list of the common safety documents that will be required to be kept. If an inspector visits you he/she may wish to see these documents. You may need some or all of these documents depending on your business.

- Written Safety Policy: for employers with five or more employees
- Record of findings of Risk Assessment: for employers with five or more employees (Some employers may also require records of assessments for manual handling, display screen equipment, control of substances hazardous to health).
- Accident records.
- The poster "Health and Safety Law What You Should Know". Alternatively a leaflet of the same name may be given to each employee.
- Records of statutory examination of lifts, hoists other lifting equipment, or pressure systems, (usually done by an insurance company).
- Employers' liability insurance Certificate: must be displayed by employers.
- Staff training records.
- Gas and/or electrical maintenance records.
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4) SAFETY POLICY

If you have five or more employees you must have a written safety policy. A safety policy is a document which helps to clarify who is responsible for what and what your safety procedures are.

Policies should contain the following and be reviewed from time to time:

- A statement of your commitment to health and safety - what you are going to do?
- Details of how you are organised and how the policy will be put into practice - who is going to do what?
- Details of the health and safety risks present in your workplace and what you are doing to prevent those risks causing harm.

You may find that the policy is best linked with the risk assessment.

A skeleton policy statement and guidance on how to use it is available from HSE books and available on line at www.hse.gov.uk/business/policy.htm, also see section 25.

Further reading:

INDG275	Managing Health & Safety
INDG259	An Introduction to Health and Safety

5) RISK ASSESSMENTS

Why do a risk assessment and how does it work for me?

Accidents and ill-health have statistically been shown to result from poor health and safety management. The costs to business are varied such as delays in production, sick pay, damage to stock, companies' reputation, increased insurance – to name just a few. Getting a head start in preventing incidences of ill-health and accidents before they happen makes good business sense. Many small businesses find risk assessment difficult but you must make an assessment of the risks in your business regardless of its size. An assessment of risk is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether or not you have taken enough precautions to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that nobody is injured or becomes ill.

Many small businesses can do the assessment themselves particularly where there are few risks. For more complex activities you may have to get somebody to help do the assessment.

How to do an assessment

The first step is to look for the hazards in your business. You may think that there are no hazards in your workplace but if you step back and think about what you do, or take a walk around the business, you may see a number of hazards. A hazard means anything that can cause harm (e.g. chemicals, electricity, working on ladders etc).

The next step is to think about what the risk is from the hazards you have seen, and who could be injured or made ill by the hazards.

Risk is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by a hazard.

Next, think about what you need to do to prevent people being harmed and decide whether or not you are doing enough. You can use the information in this booklet as a guide to the standards that you should be meeting, or use the booklets referred to at the end of each chapter. See also "Getting More Help", Section 25 at the end of this booklet.

If you find something needs to be done to prevent harm you should give priority to the risks which are most serious. You should try to remove the hazard completely but if this is not possible you should find out how to control the risks so that harm is unlikely.

Telling people about the assessment

You must tell your employees about the risks to their health and safety and the measures that you have devised to control the risks. They must also be trained and supervised in the use of any safety devices or personal protective equipment. If you share your workplace tell the other employers or self employed people of the harm your work could cause to them.

Recording the findings

If you have fewer than five employees you do not need to write anything down but if you have five or more employees you must record the findings of the assessment. There is an example of part of an assessment which you may find useful on the following pages of this guide but, by all means, produce one in your own form if it suits you better.

Reviewing the Assessment

Things will change with time and you will need to consider whether or not the changes create more risks. If there are substantial changes you should repeat the assessment for the changes and record the fact that you have done this. Remember - the aim of assessment is not to carry out a complex analysis but to make decisions about what needs to be done to make things safe and healthy. Simple risks can usually be dealt with simply and quickly.

Further reading:

INDG163

5 Steps to Risk Assessment

INDG259

An Introduction to Health and Safety

More on Risk Assessment can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/riskassess.htm

Risk Assessment Training

The HSE website provides free example information to assist in the construction of risk assessment. Examples of risk assessments are provided for the following areas:

- Estate agency
- Motor vehicle mechanical repair workshop
- Convenience store/newsagent
- Office based business
- General office cleaning
- Warehouse
- Betting office
- Motor vehicle showroom
- Butcher's shop
- Travel agency
- Cleaning large retail premises
- Cleaning contractor
- Off licence
- Office work at a manufacturing company
- Hairdressing salon
- Cold storage warehousing
- Chilled storage

Follow the link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/> for more examples.

EXAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT

Name: Warehouse Supplies
Address: 22 Any Lane, Dundee
Activity Assessed: storage of goods in racks

HAZARD (look for hazards that you could reasonably expect to cause harm – list the hazards in this column)	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED? (identify and list the groups of people who are at risk)
1. Possible overload of racks	1 Warehouse staff, particularly order pickers and visitors
2. Possible collapse of racks	2 Warehouse staff particularly order pickers and visitors
3. Individual boxes have to be manually handled	3 Warehouse staff particularly order pickers and visitors
4. Forklift traffic	4 Warehouse staff particularly order pickers and visitors; racking may become damaged
5. Falls from height	5 Warehouse staff particularly order pickers

Date of Assessment: 1st October 2011
Signed: Mr Warehouse
Date of Review: 1st October 2012

<p>PRECAUTIONS TAKEN (Have you taken precautions against the risks from the hazards listed? List the precautions here).</p>	<p>IS FURTHER ACTION NEEDED? (What more could you reasonably do to control the risks? List what you need to do here).</p>
<p>1 Racks bolted to walls/floors</p>	<p>1 Mark safe working loads on all racks.</p>
<p>2 Racks checked for damage periodically</p>	<p>2 Ensure all staff are trained to check and report damage to management.</p>
<p>3 All goods packaged in small cartons, maximum weight 10kg. Weight marked on all cartons. Palletised loads placed in racks by forklift.</p>	<p>3 Move none palletised loads to lower heights in the racking to facilitate easier manual handling.</p>
<p>4 Only authorised drivers allowed to drive forklift. Forklift drivers all trained. Pedestrian walk ways marked out in warehouse.</p>	<p>4 Highlight and guard obstructions and vulnerable equipment in the warehouse. All staff and visitors must wear high visibility clothing in warehouse</p>
<p>5 Wheeled step ladders used.</p>	<p>5 Move non-palletised loads to lower heights in the racking to facilitate easier manual handling and remove the need for extensive work at height.</p>

This list is an example and not exhaustive, you must look at all your procedures to ensure you cover all hazards within your own business.

6) SAFE WORKING PROCEDURES

Having clear procedures helps to get things right and make sure work is done safely.

The need for safe procedures can be identified when you do your risk assessment.

When looking at your procedures don't forget:

- Routine work including cleaning.
- Maintenance work.
- Emergencies such as fire or spillages.

Think about:

- Have safety procedures been worked out for the job?
- Are the equipment and tools right for the job?
- Do workers know about the safety procedures?
- Are the workers competent to carry them out?
- Do workers know what to do if something goes wrong?

If you can't answer yes to the five points above the job probably won't be done safely.

7) TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Employees must have enough information and training on their work. You must:

- Tell employees about the hazards and how to avoid them.
- Give specialist training in some jobs.
- Carry out refresher training when necessary.

Various organisations offer training such as: Dundee College, Kingsway Campus, Old Glamis Road, Dundee, DD3 8LE, www.dundeecollege.ac.uk/Home, Angus College, Keptie Road, Arbroath, DD11 3EA, www.angus.ac.uk/, Perth College UHI, Freepost TY333, Perth PH1 2BR, <http://www.perth.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx>, The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) www.rehis.org.uk, The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health www.iosh.co.uk/, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents www.rospa.com. The Health and Safety Executive's own website

www.hse.gov.uk also has lots of information on training.

HSE's Infoline offers free advice on health and safety issues and can be contacted: Tel: 0845 345 0055 or Email: hse.infoline@connaught.plc.uk

Further reading:

INDG345 Health and Safety Training

More on Health and Safety Training can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/business/training.htm

8) ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Accident prevention

As far as possible, accidents at work should be prevented. If you have the proper safety arrangements in place injuries should not happen. Doing a proper risk assessment (Section 5) will help you to do this.

If injuries do happen you should have clear procedures for providing first aid, getting assistance, investigating and reporting the accident to the authorities where appropriate (see below).

Proper accident investigation can prevent similar injuries and should be carried out straight away.

Reporting accidents

Certain accidents, illnesses or dangerous occurrences must be reported to the Incident Contact Centre via any of the following methods:

By telephone (charged at local call rate): 0845 300 9923.

By email: riddor@connaught.plc.uk

By completing on line at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/online.htm> or alternatively link in via the HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

By post to the following address: Incident Contact Centre, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly, CF83 3GG.

The following is a guide to when you need to report accidents and how to report them:

Death or major injury

If there is an accident connected with work and: your employee or a self-employed person working on your premises is killed or suffers a major injury (including as a result of physical violence); or a member of the public is killed

or taken to hospital; you must notify the Incident Contact Centre without delay (e.g. telephone). They will ask for brief details about your business, the injured person and the accident. Definitions of major accidents are given later.

Over-three-day injury

If there is an accident connected with work (including an act of physical violence) and your employee, or a self-employed person working on your premises, suffers an over-three-day injury you must report it to the Incident Contact Centre within ten days. An over-three-day injury is one which is not major but results in the injured person being away from work or unable to do their normal work for more than three days (including non work days).

Injuries to members of the public

You must notify the Incident Contact Centre without delay if a member of the public is taken to hospital as a result of an injury from an accident at the work place.

Disease

If a doctor notifies you that your employee suffers from a reportable work-related disease then you must report the details to the Incident Contact Centre. A summary of the reportable diseases is given later.

Dangerous occurrence

If something happens which does not result in a reportable injury, but which clearly could have done, then it may be a dangerous occurrence which must be reported immediately (e.g. by telephone). A summary of the reportable dangerous occurrences is given later.

Reportable major injuries are:

- This list summarises the major injuries
- fracture other than to fingers, thumbs or toes
- amputation
- dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine
- loss of sight (temporary or permanent)
- chemical or hot metal burn to the eye or any penetrating injury to the eye
- injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- any other injury; leading to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or unconsciousness; requiring resuscitation; or requiring admittance to

- hospital for more than 24 hours;
- unconsciousness caused by asphyxia or exposure to harmful substance or biological agent
- acute illness requiring medical treatment, or loss of consciousness arising from absorption of any substance by inhalation, ingestion or through the skin
- acute illness requiring medical treatment where there is reason to believe that this resulted from exposure to a biological agent or its toxins or infected material.

Reportable dangerous occurrences are:

- collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment
- lifting equipment-explosion
- collapse or bursting of any closed vessel or associated pipe work
- failure of any freight container in any of its load-bearing parts
- plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines
- electrical short circuit or overload causing fire or explosion
- any unintentional explosion, misfire, failure of demolition to cause the intended collapse
- projection of material beyond a site boundary,
- injury caused by an explosion
- accidental release of a biological agent likely to cause severe human illness
- failure of industrial radiography or irradiation equipment to de-energise or return to its safe position after the intended exposure period
- malfunction of breathing apparatus while in use or during testing immediately before use
- failure or endangering of diving equipment
- the trapping of a diver
- an explosion near a diver or an uncontrolled ascent
- collapse or partial collapse of a scaffold over five metres high, or erected near water where there could be a risk of drowning after a fall
- unintended collision of a train with any vehicle; dangerous occurrence at a well (other than a water well)
- dangerous occurrence at a pipeline
- failure of any load-bearing fairground equipment, or derailment or unintended collision of cars or trains
- a road tanker carrying a dangerous substance overturns, suffers

- serious damage, catches fire or the substance is released
- a dangerous substance being conveyed by road is involved in a fire or the substance is released
- unintended collapse of: any building or structure under construction, alteration or demolition where over five tonnes of material falls
- explosion or fire causing suspension of normal work for over 24 hours

Reportable diseases include:

- certain poisonings;
- some skin diseases such as occupational dermatitis, skin cancer, chrome ulcer, oil folliculitis/acne;
- lung diseases including: occupational asthma, farmer's lung, pneumoconiosis, asbestosis, mesothelioma;
- infections such as: leptospirosis; hepatitis; tuberculosis; anthrax; legionellosis and tetanus;
- other conditions such as: occupational cancer; certain musculoskeletal disorders; decompression illness and hand-arm vibration syndrome.

The full list of reportable diseases can be found in the detailed guide to the regulations on the Incident Contact Centre website. You can still report directly to your local HSE office or local authority see section 25 (by phone and then on form 2508 or 2508A), and these reports will be forwarded to the ICC for processing.

First Aid

All businesses have to make arrangements for first aid treatment. You must have:

- Someone to take charge in an emergency.
- A first aid box.
- Notices telling people where the box is and who the appointed person is.

Remember: Qualified first aiders must be trained by an organisation registered with the Employment Medical Advisory Service. See section 25 at the end of the booklet for contact points.

Further reading:

INDG355	Reduce Risks - Cut Costs
L73	Guide to RIDDOR 1995
INDG214	First aid at work - your questions answered
INDG347	Basic advice on first aid at work

More on Accident Reporting can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/business/riddor.htm

More on First Aid at Work can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/

9) MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are the most common occupational illness in Great Britain, affecting 1.0 million people a year. They include problems which you may be aware of such as low back pain, joint injuries and repetitive strain injuries of various sorts.

Handling loads incorrectly can cause a large number of injuries and time off work. The chance of injury is increased where handling loads is prolonged, repetitive or combined with awkward movements.

You must:

- Avoid manual handling if a safer way is practical.
- If you can't avoid it, assess the risk of injury to employees and take steps to reduce this risk.

Some practical ways of reducing the chance of injury are:

- Provide mechanical assistance.
- Make loads lighter/smaller/easier to grasp.
- Alter the layout of the workplace to allow loads to be moved about easier.
- Train people in safe lifting techniques.
- As a final measure think about protective equipment for hands and feet.

Don't forget: moving materials mechanically is safer but there can still be hazards from equipment such as lift trucks and conveyors.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) can contribute to MSDs. A small proportion of people who work with these do suffer ill health but this is commonly caused by the way the equipment is used.

The problems can be avoided by proper use of the equipment. You should:

- Assess the risks to employees, identifying people at risk and what needs to be done to protect them.
- Make sure workstations meet basic health and safety requirements with suitable display screen, keyboard, desk and chair.
- Make sure the working environment is satisfactory with adequate space, suitable lighting, temperature and humidity.
- Design the job to reduce stress and repetition.
- Provide suitable breaks from DSE work (not necessarily rest periods but different work e.g. filing).
- Provide eyesight tests free of charge for "users".
- Provide health and safety training on DSE work for "users".

Further reading:

INDG143	Getting to Grips with Manual Handling
INDG36	Working with VDUs
L23	Manual Handling
L26	Display Screen Equipment
HSG90	VDUs - an easy guide

More on Musculoskeletal Disorders can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/msd/index.htm

10) WORKPLACE TRANSPORT

Transport in the workplace causes many serious accidents every year. A wide range of transport is common to many businesses including cars, vans, heavy goods vehicles and fork lift trucks.

The following indicates what you need to do:

- Use risk assessment as a basis for identifying and assessing the risks systematically - see Section 5. Try identifying the hazards

associated with vehicle activities in your workplace and assess whether existing precautions are adequate.

- Check that the layout of routes caters for the safety of pedestrians. Try to keep the public segregated.
- Check that vehicle routes are suitable for the type and size of vehicles that use them.
- Check that suitable safety features are included e.g. signs, markings, and speed limits.
- Check that vehicles are kept in a safe condition.
- Check that drivers are properly trained and actually drive safely.
- Keep the need for reversing to a minimum and when it is done that it is safe.
- Check that loading and unloading operations are carried out safely.

Further reading:

INDG199	Workplace Transport Safety
WPT20	Reversing
HSG136	Workplace transport safety

More on Workplace Transport can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/

11) FALLS FROM HEIGHT

Falls from height means work in any place where a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury: such as shelf stacking, putting up a display, machine maintenance. A third of all reported falls from height incidents involve using ladders and step ladders. Precautions are needed where there is a risk of injury from a fall irrespective of whether the fall height is 10 cm or 10 metres.

Further reading:

INDG401	The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (as amended)
INDG 402	Safe use of ladders and step ladders

More on Working at Height can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/falls/

12) SLIPS AND TRIPS

Slip and trip accidents are common and are often underestimated. They can happen for a number of reasons; understanding the true cause can give you some ideas on what you can do to stop accidents from happening again. The following factors described below can play a part in contributing to a slip or trip accident. One or more may play a part in any situation or accident:

- Flooring.
- Footwear.
- Cleaning.
- People.
- Environment.
- Contamination and obstacles

Everyone in the workplace has a part to play when it comes to preventing slips and trips, from the person who designed the building to the people working inside of it, and the public too. Prevention of slips and trips is often simple and of little cost.

Further reading:

INDG225 Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls at Work

More on Slips and Trips can be found at HSE web site
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/>

13) WORK-RELATED STRESS

Although stress may be minimal in smaller business it is better to be aware that work related stress is a major cause of ill-health with the workplace. Excessive pressure can lead to stress, which undermines performance, is costly to employers and can make people ill. There are many positive benefits to tackling stress such as reducing sickness absence costs, customer satisfaction and staff recruitment and retention.

Further reading:

INDG340 How to tackle work-related stress A guide for employers on making the Management Standards work

INDG424 Working together to reduce stress at work. A guide for employees.

More on Work Related Stress can be found at HSE web site
www.hse.gov.uk/stress/

14) DERMATITIS

Work related dermatitis is one of the major occupational skin diseases and can be caused by a person coming into contact with:

- chemicals;
- frequent contact with water;
- biological agents (e.g. plants, bacteria and fungi);
- physical agents (e.g. vibration, UV radiation); and
- mechanical abrasion (e.g. abrasive substances such as sand and rough edged surfaces and tools).

Practical action by employers is the key to preventing the causes of work related dermatitis. These actions are often simple and of little cost.

Further reading:

INDG233 Preventing dermatitis at work.
INDG330 Selecting protective gloves for work with chemicals:
Guidance for employers and health and safety specialists.

More on Dermatitis can be found at HSE web site
www.hse.gov.uk/skin/

15) ASBESTOS

Your building may contain asbestos. It is likely to be present if your building:

- Was constructed or refurbished before 2000 particularly if it has a steel frame.
- Has boilers with insulation

If you are an owner, occupier, landlord etc. of any non-domestic property regulations place a legal duty on you to establish the location and condition of any asbestos-containing material on your premises. You also need to properly manage the risk associated with any asbestos. (You must assume that materials contain asbestos unless it has been clearly established that they do

not.) Proper management will include risk assessment, record keeping, maintenance and/or removal of asbestos-containing material, making sure that those who may need to know are informed of the presence of asbestos and regular monitoring of the situation.

Work on asbestos insulation or lagging must normally only be done by a contractor licensed by HSE. If in doubt don't disturb it.

Further reading:

INDG223 A short Guide to Managing Asbestos in Premises
INDG289 Working with Asbestos in Buildings
More on Asbestos can be found at HSE web site
www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/

16) NOISE AND VIBRATION

Exposure to excessive noise accelerates the normal hearing loss that occurs with age. It is also associated with the onset of tinnitus (continuous ringing in the ears), interference with workers' communication and concentration and causes additional stress and fatigue. Instantaneous damage can result from exposure to extremely loud noise but most damage is cumulative, making it more difficult to notice until it is too late. The health effect of noise exposure depends primarily upon the noise level which is measured in decibels or dB(A) and the duration of exposure.

Further reading

INDG362 Noise at work Guidance for employers on the Control of
Noise at Work Regulations 2005

More on Noise at Work can be found at HSE web site
www.hse.gov.uk/noise/

More on Vibration at Work can be found at HSE web site
www.hse.gov.uk/vibration/

17) THE WORKPLACE

The following standards apply when you have employees.

Toilets and washing facilities

Provide enough toilets and wash basins for staff. Keep the facilities clean, well lit, ventilated and in good working order. Provide enough hot and cold (or warm) running water, soap and towels (or electric driers) at the wash basins. The minimum numbers of facilities are shown in the table. You should make sure that the facilities provide adequate privacy.

Number of people at work	Number of water closets	Number of wash basins
1 to 5	1	1
6 to 25	2	2
26 to 50	3	3
51 to 75	4	4
76 to 100	5	5

Drinking water

Provide a clearly marked supply of drinking water. The supply must be accessible to employees and should not be in sanitary accommodation, so far as is practicable.

Temperature of Workrooms

The temperature of workrooms should be comfortable. Keep the temperature up to a minimum of 16°C where people sit at their work. Where work involves physical effort the temperature can be lower at 13°C but no lower. In summer you should ensure that the workplace does not become excessively hot. A thermometer must be provided to enable the temperature to be checked by employees.

Ventilation

Provide adequate ventilation to all areas where people work. Fresh air should come from a location which is not contaminated with fumes or dust.

Lighting

Make sure that there is enough natural or artificial light to make your workplace and work activities safe. Avoid lights which are too bright or cause glare and make sure lights are in suitable positions.

Room Size and Space

Workrooms must have enough space to enable people to move about and do their work in comfort. As a minimum each person must have 11 cubic metres of space in the workroom (for a normal height room this is approximately 4 square metres of floor space).

Workstations

Provide enough space and a suitable layout to workstations to enable work to be performed safely. Where work can be done seated, provide a suitable seat and, if necessary a footrest.

Clothing

Provide lockers or hanging places to enable workers' own clothes to be stored and where necessary, dried.

Rest/Meal areas

Provide facilities for workers during breaks to enable them to rest or eat meals. In offices or similar areas work seats may be sufficient.

Floors and gangways

Keep these clear and in good repair. Openings and edges of raised floors should be kept covered or guarded.

Stairs

Keep stairs clear and in good repair. Make sure that staircases have a suitable balustrade and a handrail. Staircases which are wide or heavily used may need more than one handrail.

Falls or falling objects

Work at Heights should be avoided wherever possible and if it must be undertaken the safest method of work must be selected. Goods at height must be stored safely to prevent them falling and a safe means of accessing the goods must be selected and training given on the method. Where people work on floors at a high level the floor must be constructed to take the appropriate weight, open edges must be guarded to prevent people falling and toe boards put in place to prevent objects falling off the edge.

Further reading:

INDG244 Workplace Health Safety and Welfare
L24 Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
Approved Code of Practice

More Workplace Health Safety and Welfare can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/business/welfare.htm

18) PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

It is far better, and a legal requirement, to eliminate the risk rather than to rely on workers using protective clothing. If protective equipment is still needed it must be provided free by the employer. You must:

- Provide the right equipment. Check with your supplier, they can advise you.
- Choose equipment which fits the wearer. If you let users help choose it they are more likely to use it.
- Make sure people look after it and store it properly when not in use.
- Instruct and train people in its use. Tell them what it will protect them from and what it won't.
- Check regularly that it is worn and if not find out why. Use safety signs to remind people.

Further reading:

INDG 174 A short guide to Personal Protective Equipment at Work
Regs 1992
L25 Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations
1992 (as amended)

More on Personal Protective Equipment at Work can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/cosHH/basics/ppe.htm

19) MACHINERY

There are many hazards associated with machinery at work which can cause serious injuries. Even if the dangers are so obvious that you think nobody will take risks near machines you are mistaken. You cannot rely on employees to avoid dangerous parts.

The following points will help you ensure that machines are used safely:

- Make sure all dangerous parts are guarded.
- Provide instruction and training for all operators. Don't allow untrained people to use machines.
- Make sure controls are properly marked and that emergency stops are brightly coloured and easily reached.
- Never let machines be cleaned while they are operating.
- Keep machines in good working order. Some machines such as lifting equipment and air receivers must be inspected regularly by a competent person - usually an insurance company engineer.

Further reading:

L22	Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Approved Code of Practice and guidance
INDG291	Simple guide to the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
INDG290	Simple Guide to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
INDG229	Using Work Equipment Safely

More on Work Equipment can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/equipment/index.htm

20) ELECTRICITY

Electric shock, burns, fires and explosions can all be caused by poor electrical standards. Simple commonsense precautions can help to reduce the risks in most businesses but if you use electrical equipment outdoors or in flammable, wet or harsh conditions you will need to get specialist advice.

The main points for general safety are covered below:

- Make sure that all electrical wiring and equipment is sound. If wiring

is old or has not been checked for some time it should be inspected by a competent person and repaired if necessary.

- Check that cables and sockets can cope with the loads on them.
- Make sure that switches including the mains switches are clearly identified and readily accessible.
- Check portable equipment periodically to make sure that it is safe. Take suspect or faulty equipment out of use and label it "DO NOT USE" until it is attended to.
- If you extend or join cables use or a properly insulated connector or coupler. Do not use "chocolate block" terminal connections.

Further reading

INDG231	Electrical safety and you
INDG236	Maintaining portable electrical equipment in offices and other low risk environments
INDG237	Maintaining portable electrical equipment in hotels and tourist accommodation.

More on Electricity at Work can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm

21) GAS

There is a danger of fire and explosion from gas or production of toxic fumes if appliances are not working properly.

Gas supply

If you suspect a gas leak you must turn off the gas and contact the National Gas Emergency Service.

- Don't smoke or use naked flames
- Do open doors and windows to get rid of the gas
- Don't turn electric switches on or off

Call free: the National Gas Emergency Service 0800 111 999

Gas appliances.

Gas appliances must be properly fitted and maintained to make sure that they are safe. You must:

- Use a competent fitter to install, maintain or service gas equipment.

Any business or fitter that works on gas fittings must be registered with Gas Safe Register. It is important to check this.

- Check that the room has adequate ventilation.

Further reading:

INDG 238 Gas Appliances - Get them checked. Keep them safe.

More on Gas Safety can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/gas/index.htm

22) LIQUIFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG)

LPG is defined as commercial butane, propane or any mixture of the two. The main hazards are fire and explosion. Asphyxiation can be a danger in low lying storage areas as LPG is heavier than air and so sinks, displacing available air from below.

Safety requirements for the use and storage of LPG depend upon the amount kept at any one set of premises, although precautions are required for even very small quantities. The main items that must be taken into consideration are separation distances, ventilation, security, warning signs and control of ignition sources. For the purposes of safety, empty cylinders are considered to be the same as full because of their residual content.

Further Reading

INDG370 Fire and Explosion - How Safe is your Workplace
HSE Working with ADR. An Introduction to the Carriage of
Publication Dangerous Goods by Road
INDG261 Pressure Systems - Safety and You

More on Liquefied Petroleum Gas can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/gas/lpg/about.htm

23) HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Many substances can hurt you or your employees if they get onto or into the body. Many small businesses have few hazardous substances so the dangers can be identified easily and dealt with.

Look at the substances that are used in your business or are generated by the work you do. If there are any that are likely to cause ill health (you can usually find this out from the label) you need to make an assessment. This is what is known as a COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessment:

- If substances are hazardous, get the safety data sheets from your suppliers (they must provide them).
- Look at how you use the substances (find out what actually happens, not what you think might happen). Compare this with what the data sheets or labels say and decide what you need to do.
- Stop using the substance if possible or use one that is less harmful.
- If you have to continue using it then make sure the necessary precautions are taken such as enclosing the process or by providing extra ventilation.
- Provide personal protective equipment (see Section 18 also).
- Train your employees in the right precautions. Make sure they use them.
- Write down what you have done.

Useful information can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/asthma

Further reading:

INDG352	Read the label - how to find out if chemicals are dangerous
INDG136	Working with substances hazardous to health What you need to know about COSHH
HSG97	A step by step guide to COSHH assessments

More on Working with Substances Hazardous to Health can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>

24) SAFETY SIGNS

All places of work will find the need for a number of signs about health and safety. To ensure that these are clear and universally understood, the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 requires that these signs must all be in a certain format with symbols recognised throughout Europe. It is therefore easier to purchase such signs from one of the printing companies who specialise in their production.

Further Reading

L64 The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996

More on Safety Signs can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg184.htm

25) GETTING MORE HELP

This handbook can only provide an introduction to health and safety at work. The HSE website and the internet provide an unlimited source of information to assist. All free HSE leaflets can be downloaded from the HSE website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

Further guidance is produced in a wide range of literature from HSE Books both priced and non-priced printed and multimedia products.

HSE priced and free publications are available by mail order from:
HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA
Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995
E mail: hsebooks@prolog.uk.com
HSE priced publications are also available from good booksellers

Other Useful Organisations Include:

Healthy Working Lives: Most employers would have no trouble in agreeing that ideally they would like their employees to be healthy. Healthy people are more likely to be happy, motivated, and obviously, take less time off work, so adding to the productivity of the company. We all know we have an ageing population in this country and it's vital that we do everything we can to support physical and mental well-being.

The Healthy Working Lives Programme encourages companies to achieve a healthier workplace by supporting workplaces in thinking about how health and well-being can be actively promoted within the workplace. The programme has three levels – bronze, silver and gold and all the advice and information required to progress through the levels is provided free of charge by the Tayside Healthy Working Lives Team. The team can also provide support to workplaces who employ less than 250 people with regard to health and safety issues and workplace hazards. This

confidential service is also provided free of charge.

The team can offer training and information and awareness sessions for local companies who want to get involved.

Companies will see benefits in both the long and short term as absenteeism improves, accidents and hazards at work are reduced and a healthier, more motivated workforce is created. It is also good for the company's image. Completing an award shows both its workforce and its customers that they care about their employees."

Find out more about the programme by contacting your local Healthy Working Lives Team on Dundee (01382) 424093/424057 or contacting the national advice line 0800 019 2211.

For further information visit www.healthyworkinglives.com

Working Health Services Tayside is for employees in small and medium sized businesses (less than 250 staff) and people who are self employed in Dundee. The service offers free, rapid and confidential access to specialist work health professionals. Services available include physiotherapy, counselling, case management and occupation therapy. To access the service please call 01382 825100.

Tayside Fire and Rescue: Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Blackness Road Dundee DD1 5PA

Tel: 01382 322222

Fax: 01382 200791

Email: enquiries@taysidefire.gov.uk

Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), The Grange, Highfield Drive, Wigston, Leics LE18 1NN Tel 0116 257 3100

Provides a register of safety practitioners and courses in a range of safety and health issues.

THE ENFORCING AUTHORITIES:

Type of business		Enforcing Authority Dundee City Council,
Office		Environmental Health and Trading Standards,
Shop		1 Highland Chief Way, Claverhouse West
Warehouse	}	Industrial Park
Leisure		Dundee, DD4 9UA
Public House/Hotel		Tel: 01382 436260
Restaurant/Cafe/Take		Fax: 01382 436226
Away		Email: health.safety@dundeecity.gov.uk

Factory		Health and Safety Executive
Construction Site		Belford House
Agriculture	}	59 Belford Road
Mines & Quarries		Edinburgh
Local authority		EH4 3UE
		Telephone: 0131 247 2000

Also of Note

For information on occupational health contact: Employment Medical Advisory Service, Belford House, 59 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3UE
Tel: 0131 247 2000

Services include:

- Health and Safety
- Food Safety including Corporate Food Safety
 - Public Health
- Environment (including Air Quality, Contaminated Land and Noise)
 - Environmental compliance
 - Port Health
 - Home Safety
 - Animal Control
 - Pest Control
 - Weights and measures
 - Calibration centre
 - Consumer safety and advice
- Fair trading including pricing
- Petroleum and explosives
 - Trusted Trader



What We Do in Environmental Health and Trading Standards (EHTS)

EHTS plays a key role in protecting the health, wellbeing and consumer interests of people who live and work in Dundee as well as visitors to the City through a wide range of enforcement responsibilities, services and promotional activities.

Environmental Health is the enforcement agency for food safety, workplace health and safety, pollution control, public health and port health.

The department operates from:

**1 Highland Chief Way, Claverhouse West
Industrial Park, Dundee, DD4 9UA**

Tel: 01382 436260

Fax: 01382 436226

Email: health.safety@dundeecity.gov.uk