

# Workplace Health and Safety

*in the  
Cleaning  
Industry*

*A Guide to Risk Management*



QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENT OF  
EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING  
AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

DIVISION OF WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

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# Managing Risk

If you're in business...any business, you know about managing risk. Your survival depends on it! Property insurance, workers' compensation insurance, bank overdraft... all involve carefully calculated risk. But what about workplace health and safety? What are the risks faced by workers in the cleaning business?

As an employer, you should know. You have an obligation, under the **Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995**, to ensure the health and safety of your staff, your customers, even visitors. This can be difficult, because your workers may often operate alone, in workplaces owned by other people. This guide will help you to identify the hazards associated with your industry, to assess the risks to health and safety, and if necessary, to eliminate them, or reduce them to an acceptable level.

## Hazards

The Macquarie Dictionary defines a hazard as "a potential source of harm." There are hazards in every workplace. In the cleaning industry, for example, caustic soda a common cleaning agent, is a hazard because it has the potential to cause skin and eye damage. An industrial polisher is a hazard because it has a powerful electric motor.

## Risks

The Macquarie Dictionary defines a risk as "exposure to the chance of injury or loss." When caustic soda is properly used, for the purpose for which it is intended, by someone who knows how to use it, there is very little chance of injury. The risk is low. On the other hand, if it is splashed about by an untrained or careless person, the risk of injury is high. If an industrial polisher is well maintained and used by a trained operator the risk of electric shock is low. If it used by an untrained operator, or when it is known to be faulty, or if it is poorly maintained, the risk is high.

The level of risk depends on the way the situation is **managed**.

As an employer, you must identify the hazards in your workplace. You must assess their potential to cause harm. Some pose a significant threat to health and safety; others are relatively low risk. Then, if necessary, you must take steps to reduce the exposure of everyone in your workplace (or workplaces) to the chance of injury; i.e. you must control the risk, either by eliminating it, or by reducing it to an acceptable level.

# Control Measures - The Hierarchy of Control.

To control the level of risk posed by a hazard in your workplace you have a number of options:

In order, these are.

*elimination* **The most desirable option.** If you eliminate a hazard you completely eliminate the associated risk.

*Substitution* You can substitute something else (a tool or a process) that has less potential to cause injury.

*Separation* You can separate workers from the hazard.

*Redesign* You can redesign a process or equipment to make it safer.

*Administration* You may be able to reduce risk by upgrading training, changing rosters, or other administrative actions.

*Personal Protective Equipment* **The least desirable option.** When you can't reduce the risk of injury in any other way, use personal protective equipment (gloves, goggles, etc) as a last resort.

In practice, several control options are often used in combination.

**Review:** When you have put a control option (or a combination of control options) into practice, you must review it after a period of time to make sure it is actually reducing the risk.

## Cleaning industry

People in the cleaning industry have identified five major hazards.

### **They are:**

Any activity requiring a person to use force to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move or restrain an object.

Manual handling tasks include

- lifting heavy cartons or equipment
- repetitive or forceful movements
- work carried out in awkward postures.

### 1. Manual Handling

Injuries may happen as a result of a “one-off” event, but more often they are the result of stress and strain over a long period of time.

The characteristics of the area where you work. Elements include floors and other surfaces, noise, lighting, temperature, ventilation, accessibility and housekeeping. The most common causes of injury arising from the work environment in the cleaning industry are slips, trips and falls.

Slips, trips and falls can occur when:

- walking on slippery floors after mopping
- vacuuming around fixtures and furnishings
- working in a cluttered space
- collecting and disposing of rubbish
- carrying equipment on stairs; and
- water blasting.

### 2. The Work Environment

Electrical equipment is widely used in the cleaning industry. Because of frequent use and possible abuse, its electrical safety may be compromised, exposing workers to the risk of shock, burns, or fatal injury.

Electrical accidents are usually caused by:

- using faulty equipment
- working with damaged leads
- unsafe work practices, or
- a combination of the above.

### 3. Electricity

# hazards

Cleaners can sustain injuries from broken glass, discarded sharp objects and needles. Penetrating wounds break the normal protective barrier provided by the skin and allow infection to enter. Serious infections such as Hepatitis B and HIV can enter the body in this way.

Skin penetrating injuries can be sustained when:

- carrying rubbish
- cleaning toilets and other amenities; and
- disposing of clinical waste.

## 4. Sharps - Skin penetrating Injuries

Hazardous substances (chemicals) are widely used in the cleaning industry. After exposure to a hazardous substance, a person may take some time to show signs of ill health. Hazardous substances used in the cleaning industry include:

- hydrochloric acid
- tetrachloroethylene - carpet cleaners and spotters
- sodium hydroxide - oven cleaners
- sodium hypochlorite - bleach

Workers may be exposed when:

- filling containers;
- decanting substances;
- spraying substances; and
- working in a confined area.

## 5. Hazardous Substances

## Risk Management in the Cleaning Industry.

Some work areas in the cleaning industry, and some tasks, are obviously more hazardous than others. For risk management purposes, we suggest that you consider your workplace (or workplaces) under the following categories:

### Other hazards include:

- **Plant** ~~~~~ See p 21
- **Noise** ~~~~~ See p 22
- **Occupational Violence** ~ See p 23
- **Dust** ~~~~~ See p 24

1. **Storage and Retrieval** ~~~~~ p 7
2. **General Cleaning** ~~~~~ p 11
3. **Working at Heights** ~~~~~ p 25
4. **Rubbish Collection and Disposal** ~ p 27

## Storage and Retrieval

Here the main hazards are **Manual Handling** and the **Work Environment**.

Workers are at risk when they are:

- **lifting** equipment from a vehicle
- **carrying** chemicals
- **stacking** cleaning materials on shelves
- **pulling** items off shelves

Manual Handling

Assess the risks in your workplaces.  
To manage them, apply the hierarchy of controls

### **Elimination**

Avoid manual handling wherever possible.

### **Substitution**

Wherever possible use mechanical equipment.

Ideas include:

- Use trolleys or portable ramps when unloading cleaning materials and equipment from vehicles.
- Use trolleys, "lever and wheel" forklifts, or pallet jacks when moving cleaning equipment and materials.
- Buy cleaning agents in smaller or lighter cartons or drums.

### **Separation**

Separate the hazard from the workers.

By definition, impossible to apply to manual handling!

## **Redesign**

Redesign the workplace layout, processes or equipment. In the cleaning industry, you have very little control over workplace layout because the places where you or your employees work are usually owned by someone else.

But you could recommend that building owners and/or clients:

- make storage facilities available;
- provide shelving that is between knee and shoulder height;
- provide ramps and double doors for easy access.

You can redesign work processes so that:

- double handling is reduced to a minimum, e.g. have materials delivered directly to the place where they will be used.
- items that are used most frequently are stored on the middle shelves, and lighter goods on top shelves.

## **Administration**

Change work practices.

Some ideas:

- Organise workers so that they share tasks such as lifting.
- Arrange set times for delivery of goods so that enough workers are available to handle them.
- Purchase by demand. This will save storage space, reduce stock levels, double handling and clutter and provide better access.
- Provide training in preferred lifting methods.
- Provide training in company work practices. Validate the training by competency test, and make sure only trained and competent workers perform the task.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

Consider all other control options first. Safe manual handling can only happen when a worker has a good footing. Provide non-slip shoes to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls.

## Work Environment

Here, workers are primarily at risk of slips, trips and falls.

Assess the risk in your workplaces.  
To manage it, apply the hierarchy of controls.

### **Elimination**

Avoid walking on slippery floors whenever possible, e.g. arrange to park under cover when loading and unloading vehicles.

### **Substitution**

Use floor cleaning products which do not create a slip hazard.

### **Separation**

Provide non-slip mats if unloading and storage areas have slippery floors.

### **Redesign**

Encourage clients to provide:

- non slip floors;
- adequate lighting in storage areas;
- adequate ventilation in storage areas;
- plenty of room for cleaners to load and unload;
- minimal moisture build-up on floors (a common cause of slips and falls).
- vehicular access so that unloading is done as close as possible to storage.



### **Administration**

Confirm with clients that first aid equipment is readily available at each workplace. Make sure your workers know where it is located.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

Consider all other control options first.

- Provide non-slip shoes or recommend and encourage a style of non-slip footwear, preferably rubber (an electrical insulator)
- If people are working outdoors, provide sunscreen and hats.

## General cleaning

Workers face many hazards when cleaning.

These include:

- **Manual Handling**
- **Work Environment**
- **Electricity**
- **Hazardous Substances**
- **Noise**
- **Occupational Violence**
- **Dust** and
- **Sharps**

### Manual handling

Workers are at risk when they are

- **pushing** and **pulling** mops and brooms
- **lifting** and **carrying** buckets
- **bending** and **stretching** to clean fixtures and fittings
- **holding** and **restraining** auto scrubbing machines
- **twisting** when **controlling** floor polishers.

Assess the risks in your workplaces.  
To manage them, apply the hierarchy of controls

#### **Elimination**

Avoid manual handling wherever possible.

#### **Substitution**

Wherever possible use equipment that will reduce manual handling.

- Consider using automated cleaning methods (e.g. robotic auto scrubbers) to eliminate vibration and other handling problems associated with powered equipment.
- Consider using wall vacuum systems so workers don't need to carry back packs.

### **Separation**

Separate the hazard from the workers.

Difficult to apply to manual handling.

### **Redesign**

Redesign the workplace layout, processes and equipment. In the cleaning industry, you have very little control over workplace layout because someone else usually owns the places where you or your employees work. But you could recommend that building owners and designers provide extra power points to reduce the weight of long extension leads.

You could also:

- buy a more automated machine for stripping and polishing floors; and
- use padded handles on electrical equipment to reduce vibration.
- organise teams so that manual handling tasks are shared (e.g. first worker puts rubbish bins on benches for second worker who is vacuuming).
- buy lighter or smaller machines
- provide trolleys for mops and buckets
- provide smaller bags for rubbish collection
- provide appropriate equipment for workers to reach high areas without excessive stretching and reaching.

For instance:

- step ladders, single ladders, trestles
- long-handled tools or attachments.
- Make sure ladders have holders for cleaning materials.
- Make sure polishers and other electrical equipment have adjustable handles.
- Provide bins that are lightweight and fitted with wheels.

### **Administration**

This involves changing work practices so that the risk is reduced.

- Organise job rotation so that workers move between tasks, (e.g. vacuuming, dusting, mopping).
- Provide an exercise and warm-up program before a shift.
- Provide written instructions on the correct way to operate equipment.
- Provide detailed information on each workplace (e.g. location of powerpoints) to improve efficiency.
- Review the safety aspects of all current work practices.
- Consult with workers when buying new equipment.

Consider:

- weight
- who is going to use it
- how long it is to be used for in each shift
- the variety available.
- Use vans or utes instead of sedans. This will reduce the risk of injury when unloading cleaning equipment.
- Develop a company policy about safe work practices such as lifting .
- Provide written instructions in appropriate languages and training on these preferred practices, and validate them by competency tests.
- Make sure only trained workers perform a task (e.g. stripping and polishing floors).
- Develop and implement a maintenance policy with a checklist.
  - Check and maintain trolley wheels to ensure safe, smooth movement.
  - Have all mechanical lifting equipment serviced regularly.

### **Personal Protective Equipment.**

Consider all other control options first. Use rubber soled, non-slip shoes when stripping and polishing floors.

In the general work environment, cleaners are primarily at risk of slips, trips and falls.

This can happen when:

*Work Environment*

- walking on slippery floors after mopping;
- vacuuming around fixtures and furnishings;
- working in a cluttered space; and
- water blasting.

Assess the risks in your workplaces.  
To manage them, apply the hierarchy of controls

### **Elimination**

Avoid walking on slippery floors whenever possible. One way to do this is to make more use of auto scrubbers.

### **Substitution**

Use floor cleaning products which do not create a slip hazard during the cleaning process.

### **Separation**

Use signs and barricades to separate the public and other workers from wet areas.

### **Redesign**

- Select attachments that give positive control over direction and volume of the spray of water or cleaning product This will limit the extent of wet and slippery areas.

### Administration

Change work practices to reduce risk.

- Spray cleaner on to a cloth to reduce overspray on to the floor.
- Perform tasks that create slip hazards at a time when public traffic is minimal.
- Provide training in safe work flow; e.g. complete all other cleaning before mopping, thus minimising the risk of slips.
- Develop written instructions, and train workers in the importance of the immediate clean-up of spills or drips.
- Make sure clients provide adequate lighting and ventilation (e.g. leaving air conditioning on) during cleaning operations, which will probably be outside office hours.
- Ask clients to remove obstructions (boxes, etc) near fire doors.

### Personal Protective Equipment

Consider all other control options first. Recommend non-slip rubber soled shoes.

### Electricity

#### Electricity

Electricity always has the potential to be a serious hazard in the cleaning industry.

Electrical equipment commonly used includes floor polishing machines, vacuum cleaners, rotary carpet shampoo machines, and extraction cleaning machines. Heavy use and frequent transportation of any of these items (sometimes in wet environments) may compromise electrical safety.

Workers may be exposed to the risk of electrical injury.

Electric shock can be fatal.

### Electrical accidents are usually caused by

- using faulty equipment;
- working with damaged leads; and
- unsafe work practices

Assess the risks in your workplaces.  
To manage them, apply the hierarchy of controls

## Elimination

Avoid using electrical equipment in wet areas wherever possible.

## Substitution

Use splashproof or waterproof electrical appliances instead of standard equipment.

## Separation

- Where possible, use portable safety switches to cut off the power supply to faulty equipment.

## Redesign

- Make sure all areas have enough outlet sockets to avoid the use of adaptors and extension leads.

## Administration

- All equipment **must** be regularly inspected, tested and tagged by a qualified electrical worker or attached to a 'safety switch'.
- All equipment must be serviced and maintained by a qualified electrical worker.
- Implement equipment checks before each shift.
- Practise safe systems of work:
- Leads should not run across wet surfaces, or any place where they can be easily damaged.
- Run leads along edges of corridors to minimise the possibility of trips and falls.
- Loop extra lead over appliance handles to avoid straining electrical connections.
- Keep leads away from heat, oil and chemicals to prevent insulation damage.
- Do not use faulty electrical equipment. Tag it immediately and report it to the supervisor.
- Provide training in:
  - electrical safety;
  - correct use and operation of equipment
  - emergency procedures in the event of electrocution or fire.

## Personal Protective Equipment

Consider all other control options first.

- Rubber soled (insulating) shoes may provide some protection in some cases.

## Sharps - Skin Penetrating Injuries

Sharps are objects that can penetrate the skin easily. Examples are broken glass and discarded needles. Penetrating wounds break the normal protective barrier provided by the skin and allow infection to enter. Serious infections such as Hepatitis B and HIV can enter the body in this way. In the cleaning industry, sharps are a constant hazard.

Assess the risk in your workplaces.  
To manage it, apply the hierarchy of controls.

### **Elimination**

Avoid handling sharps if possible.

### **Substitution**

If possible, use alternative methods or equipment that will reduce the risk of workers' coming into contact with sharps; for instance, use garbage bags made of tough canvas rather than plastic.

### **Separation**

Not a viable option for workers. Part of a cleaner's job may be to dispose of sharps!

### **Re-design**

Develop and document work processes that minimise risk of injury from sharps.

For instance:

- Don't feel around in places where you cannot see (e.g. behind toilets, basins and cupboards).
- Plastic garbage bags may contain sharps. Don't carry them. Use trolleys instead.
- Wrap all broken items to prevent cuts during subsequent handling.
- Use tongs to pick up needles.
- Dispose of potentially contaminated sharps into a suitable, puncture resistant container.

### **Administration**

- Document and train workers in safety procedures when handling sharps.
- Implement an accurate reporting system for all sharps. This will help identify high-risk areas.
- Review all contracts with clients to confirm that sharps removal is included.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

Consider all other control options first.

- Provide workers with portable sharps kits (gloves, tongs and containers) and train them to use them.
- Provide vaccination (e.g. Hepatitis B) if appropriate.

## Hazardous Substances

Hazardous substances can enter the body by inhalation, swallowing, or by absorption through the skin. After exposure to a hazardous substance, a person may take some time to show signs of ill health.

Hazardous substances widely used in the cleaning industry include:

- hydrochloric acid
- tetrachloroethylene - carpet cleaners and spotters
- sodium hydroxide - oven cleaners
- sodium hypochlorite - bleach

Workers may be exposed to a hazardous substance when:

- filling containers;
- decanting substances;
- spraying substances; and
- working in a confined area.

Assess the risk in your workplaces.

To manage it, apply the hierarchy of controls.

### **Elimination**

Avoid using hazardous substances for cleaning wherever possible.

### **Substitution**

Use other substances or equipment that will reduce the risk.

- Use water instead of chemicals where possible.
- Use a high pressure hose instead of a chemical.

### **Separation**

When using hazardous substances for cleaning:

- use barricades and warning signs to prevent access by members of the public.
- carry out cleaning operations when passing pedestrian traffic is minimal.

## Redesign

Install a self-diluting system to prevent contact with chemicals. Provide adequate ventilation when diluting or decanting chemicals. This can range from natural air flow, to an exhaust fan, to a fume cupboard. Design and implement work practices to reduce airborne spray (e.g. spray onto a cloth rather than directly onto a surface). Provide adequate bench space for preparing chemicals, with drip trays for overflows.

## Administration

Before any chemical is used in your workplace, **check if it is hazardous.**

You can do this by reading the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) which should come with the product. If not, the supplier must give you a MSDS on request. The MSDS will give you information about the hazards associated with the product, and steps and precautions you can take to **manage any risks.**

These could include:

- providing copies of the MSDS to staff;
- providing training in the use of the substance
- ensuring only trained workers dilute chemicals and fill bottles
- labelling all containers (including spray/squirt bottles) identifying the substance and specifying the dilution rate
- providing PPE as specified in the MSDS
- providing proper storage facilities;
- developing and documenting a procedure to ensure minimum dilution rate
- always using appropriate containers. Never put corrosives in spray bottles. Never use drink bottles for chemicals.
- insisting on good personal hygiene (washing hands before eating, etc)
- providing ready access to fire extinguishers and first aid kits
- adopting a colour coding system for chemicals
- providing access to clean-up equipment such as sand.
- ensuring adequate ventilation where the substance is used;

## Personal Protective Equipment

Consider all other control options first.

- Provide gloves, masks, glasses and aprons, as specified on the MSDS.
- Provide training on the fit, maintenance and use of PPE.

# 2. General Cleaning

## PLANT

In the cleaning industry workers operate a variety of equipment, powered and non powered.

A number of issues should be considered when dealing with plant.

For example:

- guarding of moving parts
- safety of the power source; usually electricity.
- the risk of fire or explosion
- noise
- vibration
- radiation
- stability of the equipment
- pressure vessels

Refuse compactors have a high potential to cause injury in the cleaning industry, and a history of accidents, sometimes fatal. The following control measures may minimise the risk associated with use of compactors.

- consider the use of multiple wheelie bins or industrial bins instead of the compactor
- check that the compactor has an interlock system which ensures the operator is isolated from the compactor by a dual switch mechanism while it is in use
- ensure compactors are used by trained workers only
- check maintenance schedules

Noise is a hazard which can permanently damage your hearing and affect your health in other ways such as increased blood pressure, heart rate, and stress.

You must take steps to prevent your workers being exposed to excessive noise.

A good indicator of a possible noise problem is if you have to raise your voice to be heard when you are talking to someone about one metre away.

A typical cause of noise in the cleaning industry is the back pack vacuum cleaner.

The following **control options** may be helpful:

- Replace or repair equipment which has become noisy.
- Consider buying quieter equipment as a matter of purchasing policy.
- Reduce exposure time by rotating workers through “noisy” and quiet tasks.
- Conduct noise surveys.
- Provide hearing protection (ear muffs, ear plugs) and training in its use.

Noise

## Occupational Violence

Statistically, an average person can expect to experience violence in the workplace at least once during his or her working life. Violence is defined as the unjust or unwarranted use of force or power. It has many forms - verbal abuse, threats, harassment, and physical assault, resulting in serious injury and even death.

Workers in the cleaning industry may experience violence associated with attempted robbery. Cleaners often work alone, after normal business hours and offenders may believe that the site is an easier target when cleaners are present. Cleaners may also be the victims of opportunistic violence which can occur for no apparent reason, but is quite often an outlet for the offender's built-up aggression and frustration.

To **control sources of violence** you can:

- provide information, training and supervision to help your workers deal with security issues.
- provide a confidential means for workers to report violence.

**To reduce the risk, be prepared!**

- Provide two-way communication so workers can obtain assistance in an emergency.
- Consider safe arrival and departure. Can cleaning staff have access to building security parking? Is well-lit parking available nearby?
- Organise staff to work in pairs and to be aware of partner's location during the shift.
- Provide personal alarms.
- Co-operate with building security personnel.

Due to the nature of the work, exposure to dust is almost constant in the cleaning industry. The following suggestions may reduce workers' exposure.

- Where possible use in-built wall vacuum systems.
- Seal all rubbish containers to limit airborne dust.
- Purchase vacuum cleaners with sealed dust collection bags.
- Dust with moist cloths instead of dry.
- Use dust masks.

*DUST*

## Working at Heights

When workers are cleaning external windows, skylights, and roofs, they often are operating at heights where a fall could cause serious injury or death. High wind, rain, and equipment failure may also increase the risk.

Assess the risk in your workplaces.  
To manage it, apply the hierarchy of controls.

### **Elimination**

If workers can avoid working at heights, they should do so.

### **Substitution**

Wherever possible use extensions on cleaning equipment to reach high areas.

### **Separation**

Not a viable option.

## **Redesign**

- Consider using specialised equipment such as:
- building maintenance units
- scaffolding
- suspended scaffolding
- elevating work platforms
- ladders
- Implement and document safe work practices in set-up, operating, and safe use of plant.

For example:

- Get on or off at a safe place.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not exceed safe working load.
- Know the emergency procedures, e.g. how to lower suspended scaffolding in the event of power failure
- Ensure that fixed anchoring points are capable of supporting the load.

## **Administration**

- Make sure equipment conforms to Australian Standards. Look for the AS compliance plate.
- Ensure only trained and certificated people operate equipment.
- Have equipment checked and maintained regularly.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

Consider all other control options first.

- Provide safety devices (harness or belt) and train workers in their proper use.
- Working at Heights is a complex issue.

For more information, contact Workplace Health and Safety (DETIR), or read *Advisory Standard for Falls From Heights* and *Advisory Standard for Work on Roofs*.

## Rubbish Collection and Disposal

Here the main hazards are **Manual Handling, Sharps,** and the **Work Environment.**

Workers are at risk when they are:

- bending to pick up rubbish
- carrying a load of rubbish
- lifting or pushing up the lid of an external bin
- stretching to support the lid while they load the rubbish
- stretching to load the rubbish into the bin
- pushing wheelie bins.

*Manual Handling*

Assess the risk in your workplaces.

To manage it, apply the hierarchy of controls.

### **Elimination**

Avoid manual handling wherever possible.

- Arrange for sub-contractors to pick up rubbish from wheelie bins so that workers do not need to load an industrial bin.

### **Substitution**

- Use a wheelie bin and compactor.
- Recommend that clients or building owners use a chute system direct to an external bin.
- Place rubbish bins permanently on a trolley and use mechanical bin lifters to place rubbish into industrial bins.

### **Separation**

- Install a rubbish chute to the outside bin to eliminate risks associated with a compactor and industrial bin.

### **Re-design**

- Liaise with bin manufacturers to improve bin design

For instance:

- sliding lids
- plastic lids
- better latches
- chutes installed into the sides of the bin.
- Place industrial bins as close as possible to the building.

### **Administration**

Encourage workers to push wheelie bins, not pull them.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

Consider all other control options first.

- Provide heavy duty gloves when workers are collecting rubbish and opening industrial bins.

## *Sharps, Skin-Penetrating Injuries*

Workers collecting and disposing of rubbish are at significant risk of injury from sharp objects, which can penetrate the skin, allowing serious, sometimes life-threatening infections to enter the body. For control options, see **Sharps. Skin-Penetrating Injuries** under **General Cleaning** p 17-18.

## *Work Environment*

When collecting and disposing of rubbish, workers are primarily at risk of slips, trips and falls.

For control options, see Work Environment under:

- General Cleaning p 11; and
- Storage and Retrieval p 7.

## **Training is an important risk control option.**

Well trained workers operate more efficiently and have fewer accidents. You should make sure that your workers receive adequate health and safety training.

On-the-job instruction should be provided by experienced workers who have themselves been trained in safe practices and instruction techniques.

Training should be provided:

- when a worker begins employment
- regularly - as refresher training
- when new procedures are adopted and
- when new equipment and/or technology is introduced.

Training programs should include instruction in:

- safe work practices
- specific tasks
- the safe operation and maintenance of equipment
- hazard identification and associated reporting requirements
- identified control measures to minimise risks
- safe procedures for handling hazardous substances
- safe manual handling practices
- the fitting, use and maintenance of PPE
- accident and emergency procedures and reporting requirements.

*Training*

All training should be competency based; i.e. workers should be able to demonstrate the skills in which they have just been trained.

Ensure that the content and structure of your training meets the needs of your workers, especially if they are of non-English speaking backgrounds.

Training programs should be evaluated and reviewed in consultation with workers and health and safety representatives.



# Workplace Health and Safety



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