EHS NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY BULLETIN – ENVIRONMENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

Create Occupational Health and Safety a part of your business culture.

'Retail workplaces are not associated with risks like other industries, but this does not mean workplace health and safety should be compromised.'

Regardless of whether business is slow or fast-paced, staff members still have responsibilities that require them to face potential hazards and risks daily. Exploring how to best establish and maintain safety procedures, adequately train staff and evaluate workplace health and safety procedures will increase the likelihood of integrating quality Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) into your organisation's culture and day-to-day operations.

Given the reality of working in a retail environment, workplace health and safety procedures are unfortunately viewed as more of compliance issues than a preventative measure to real danger. This can lead retailers to pay less attention to their workplace health and safety responsibilities, resulting in undesirable outcomes for not only employees but the business itself.

Equipment and hazardous goods pose constant risks to the workplace. Equipment such as cleaning chemicals, visual merchandising props, electrical equipment and combustibles all pose risks to the workplace. Procedures that utilise control guidelines such as materials safety data sheets (MSDS), adequate staff training, and personal protective equipment are effective in maximising employee health and safety.

Want to learn more about the world of tech? The EHSAS runs multiple workshops on how to create digital content and develop strategies to engage with customers. Join the EHSAS in their latest workshop which looks into how to analyse and evaluate e-Commerce trends to develop effective e-Commerce strategies for the online sale of products or services.

Manual handling is a component of several retail jobs and involves tasks that range from anything from carry heavy stock to operating a register at the checkout. As manual handling is also often a major contributor to workplace injuries, retailers should look to address manual handling risks and focus on reducing the level of risk through re-designing work processes.

Listed below are some common examples to prevent injuries:
- Organise storage so that high turnover stock is stored at waist height
- Limit the height of shelves to shoulder height
- Store large items (e.g. wheelchairs) at ground level
- Use drawers to eliminate bending and reaching
- Use height adjustable trolleys and loading items

Nearly a quarter of workplace injuries are due to staff, either slipping on wet floor surfaces, tripping on low obstacles, or falling as a result dangerous hazard. The most common injuries are cuts and bruises but can easily be more severe if workplace standards are not addressed. Compiling a checklist of safety measures to look out for will make sure your retail workplace is hazard-free. It is recommended retailers pay close attention to floor conditions, lighting and general housekeeping.

An essential part of developing workplace health and safety policies is establishing effective emergency procedures. Emergencies can be difficult to envisage; as such, consulting expert guidance and training staff in executing desired protocols will ensure an efficient response to emergencies is achieved.

Emergency training for staff is of utmost priority. This training may include evacuation drills, identifying assembly points, and familiarising staff with emergency and first aid equipment. Retailers must also be prepared to review and revise their emergency plans to reflect any changes to the workplaces such as change of premises or increase in staff numbers.

A valuable resource for retailers is fact sheet stresses that emergency procedures are clear, straightforward and store specific. Integrating workplace health and safety into organisational culture benefits everyone. Safe work procedures ensure business runs efficiently and enables staff to feel secure in the range of tasks they are required to complete.

About EHSAS

EHS Alliance Services is India's leading retail training provider for both accredited and non-accredited learning programs.
For more information, please visit. www.ehsall.in

Importance of Workplace Fire Safety Training

Fires destroy property, cause injuries, and take lives. A fire in the workplace can also mean the termination of jobs, as many of the offices and factories destroyed by fire in Canada are never rebuilt. One of the key strategies to maintaining a safe workplace and preventing fires is fire safety training. With proper training workers can eliminate fire hazards and respond quickly and efficiently if a fire breaks out. Without proper training a small occurrence can quickly grow to become a major incident with devastating outcomes. Everyone is at risk if there is a fire. However, there are some workers who may be at greater risk because of when or where they work, or because they're not familiar with the premises or the equipment at the work site.

Fire safety training can teach workers how to recognize fire hazards, conduct a fire safety risk assessment, prevent a workplace fire, and respond if a fire occurs.

Recognizing Fire Hazards - Fire safety training begins by identifying the basic properties of fire. All fires start when heat (a source of ignition) comes into contact with fuel (anything that burns) and oxygen is present. To prevent a fire the goal is to keep sources of ignition and fuel apart.

Conducting a Fire Safety Risk Assessment - The fire safety risk assessment helps identify what a workplace needs to do to prevent a fire and keep people safe. The assessment looks at:
* Emergency routes and exits
* Fire detection and warning systems
* Fire fighting equipment
* Removal or safe storage of dangerous substances
* The emergency fire evacuation plan
* The needs of vulnerable people
* Communication with employees and others on the premises
* Staff fire safety training

A fire safety risk assessment is the first step in identifying fire hazards. It also identifies the people at risk, state of emergency preparedness, and effectiveness of controls in the workplace. With the information from the risk assessment employers can make improvements in their fire safety plans and eliminate or reduce risks. Employers can also ensure appropriate training is provided to workers.

Preventing Workplace Fires - Fire safety training teaches workers how to prevent fires. If workers are aware of the best ways to prevent fires, they can contribute significantly to a safer workplace.

Tips to prevent fires in the workplace include:
* Keep the workplace clean. Common litter and construction debris act as fuel for fire. Clutter may block access to exits and emergency equipment.
* Smoke only in designated areas and extinguish smoking materials safely. Never smoke in storerooms or chemical storage areas.
* Mark hazards and potential fire risks with clear, visible signage. Post emergency telephone numbers and the company address by the telephone in all work areas.
* Keep machinery cleaned and properly lubricated to prevent overheating and friction sparks.
* Place oily rags in a covered metal container. This waste must be properly disposed of on a regular basis.
* Have faulty wiring and malfunctioning electrical equipment repaired promptly. Never attempt electrical repairs unless you are qualified and authorized.
* Avoid running electrical cords or wires under rugs and carpets or near a heat source; keep them out of doorways where they can become worn.
* Maintain open access to all electrical control panels. Material or equipment stored in front of the panels could delay power shutdowns in emergency situations.
* Use and store chemicals safely. Read the labels and the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to learn about flammability and other fire hazards. Provide adequate ventilation when using and storing these substances.
* Be aware of possible ignition sources when working in potentially explosive atmospheres, such as those containing flammable liquid vapours or fine particles (e.g. vehicle paint spraying or grain flour). Use non-sparking tools and control static electricity as required.
* Never block sprinklers, fire fighting equipment, or emergency exits. Observe clearances when stacking materials.
* Learn how to properly use a fire extinguisher. Know where fire extinguishers are located and which extinguishers to use for the specific type of fire.

How to respond if a Fire starts - It's important that everyone in the workplace is prepared for a fire
Workers need to know what to do in case a fire occurs and how to work together to effectively stop the advance of a fire.
Through fire safety training, workers learn:
* The company's emergency plan
* The worker's role in the emergency plan

* How to activate the fire alarm so the building occupants can escape
* To leave the area immediately, closing all doors behind them
* Where designated muster areas are located outside the building
* What to do if they encounter heat or smoke upon exiting
* How to fight a small fire with a portable extinguisher

Workers and employers need to take fire drills seriously and learn from them to improve response. By practicing what to do in a fire, flaws in the emergency plan can be revealed and those faults can then be addressed. Practice also builds confidence and helps keep everyone calm in the event of a real fire.

*The Use of Extinguishers -*Most workplaces contain portable fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers can only put out small, contained fires, such as a fire in a wastebasket. Extinguishers in different workplaces may or may not be suitable for dealing with grease or electrical fires. Workers that haven't received training in the proper use of portable extinguishers should not attempt to fight a fire.
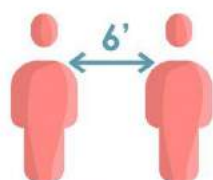
Through training workers learn to never fight a fire:
* if the fire is large or spreading
* if their escape route may be blocked by the spread of fire
* if they are not trained in the correct use of the extinguisher or are unsure of the type of fire
* If workers do fight a fire they should:
    o call 102 or 112 first
    o ensure everyone has evacuated or is leaving the area or building

Conclusion - Everyone is responsible for preventing fires in the workplace – employers and employees alike. In addition to possible injury and loss of life, a serious fire can close down a workplace resulting in significant job losses. It is possible to reduce the threat of fire to people and property by teaching everyone to work together to prevent fires with comprehensive fire safety training.

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Everyone must wear a mask

Social Distancing & limiting number of occupants

Handwashing & use of hand sanitizer

ALL UNDER ONE ROOF

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