

Health and Safety Newsletter – August 2024

Top 8 Workplace Hazards

In this edition, we will focus on resolving safety issues in the workplace. Health and Safety Reps are legally entitled to investigate and raise concerns regarding complaints, potential hazards, and dangerous occurrences within their workplace under Regulation 4 of the SRSC Regulations 1977.

1) Slips, Trips, and Falls

What is the danger? These are some of the most common causes of workplace injuries, leading to fractures, sprains, and sometimes even more severe injuries like head trauma. Wet floors, uneven surfaces, and poor lighting are typical culprits.

2) Manual Handling

What is the danger? Lifting, carrying, pushing, or pulling heavy or awkward objects can cause musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), including back injuries, strains, and repetitive strain injuries. Improper technique or excessive load can exacerbate these risks.

3) Hazardous Substances

What is the danger? Exposure to chemicals, asbestos, dust, or other hazardous substances can lead to acute effects like poisoning or burns, and long-term health issues like respiratory diseases or cancer. Inadequate ventilation or improper handling increases these risks.

4) Electrical Hazards

What is the danger? Electrical hazards, such as exposed wiring, faulty equipment, or improper grounding, can lead to electric shocks, burns, or even fatal electrocutions. Electrical fires are another significant risk associated with these hazards.

5) Working At Height

What is the danger? Falls from height are a leading cause of workplace fatalities, particularly in construction and maintenance. Even falls from relatively low heights can result in severe injuries or death if proper control measures are not in place.

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6) Machinery and Equipment

What is the danger? Operating or working near machinery presents risks of entanglement, crushing, or amputation. Poorly maintained equipment or lack of safety guards increase the danger. Workers need proper training to operate machinery safely.

7) Fire Hazards

What is the danger? Fires in the workplace can lead to burns, smoke inhalation, and even fatalities. Fire hazards include flammable materials, faulty electrical equipment, and improper storage of combustible substances. A lack of fire safety protocols and emergency exits exacerbates these risks.

8) Workplace Violence

What is the danger? Violence in the workplace can result in physical injuries, psychological trauma, and, in extreme cases, fatalities. It can arise from conflicts between employees, clients, or even external threats, making it a critical safety concern.

TUC Hazards At Work

The 6th edition of the TUCs bestselling guide to health and safety at work is a must have resource for Health & Safety Reps.

This incredibly popular book is now even more informative at over 400 pages, an invaluable resource, which incorporates common hazards and cause of ill-health at work, and how to assess and prevent them.

The book also contains HSE and other guidance, extensive checklists, case studies and web resources.

Reps can order the book by completing the form: www.usdaw.org.uk/TUCHazards

