

Inspection campaign

WorkSafe is currently conducting an inspection campaign in the hospitality industry July 2009 with a view to reducing injuries in the sector.

The campaign will involve inspectors visiting hotels, motels and resorts to identify any common safety risks and provide employers with information on how to comply with occupational safety and health requirements.

This newsletter has been developed to identify safety issues in your industry and to assist you in meeting the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act and regulations.

Hazardous substances

Many materials used at hotels, motels and resorts are classified as hazardous substances such as oven cleaners, pool chemicals and beer line cleaners. The law requires that safety and health information must be provided to workplaces in the form of Material Safety Data Sheets and labels so that the hazardous substances can be used safely.

What is a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)?

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is a document that provides information about a hazardous substance and how it should be used and how to avoid harm when using it at the workplace.

What information must be provided in an MSDS?

To comply with the law in Western Australia, an MSDS for a hazardous substance will describe its properties and uses, including:

- **the identity of the hazardous substance** eg product information to identify the hazardous substance(s) and basic information on uses;
- **chemical and physical properties** eg physical description including description of the mixture or formulation if applicable;
- **health hazard information** eg health effects from exposure and first aid information;
- **precautions for use** eg correct application and common uses, ventilation requirements, equipment for personal protection and information on flammability; and
- **safe handling information** eg safe storage in the workplace, safe transporting, dealing with spills and disposal and information for fire fighting and emergency services.

Manual handling

Workplace injuries most commonly linked to manual handling include sprains and strains, hernias and damage to the back.

Such injuries are a major cause of lost time at work and make up almost one-third of Western Australia's workers' compensation claims. In the five years to 1999-2000, almost seven million days were lost from work in WA as a result of manual handling injuries; and a total of 132,819 workers' compensation claims were made at an average cost of \$18,000 each.

'Manual handling' is more than just keeping your back straight and knees bent, or lifting properly – it includes carrying, pushing and pulling, and holding or restraining.

Just as manual handling is more than just lifting, so the things that affect the risk of injury involve more than just the weight of the objects handled. Factors such as awkward movements, fixed postures and how long and quickly a task is performed are also very important.

Injuries can be the result of gradual wear and tear (eg from frequent or prolonged activities), or sudden damage (eg from a single lift of something very heavy or awkward to handle or from tripping and falling while carrying an object).

Jobs involving physical stress or repetitive movements have the highest rates of manual handling injuries – over half the lost time injuries involving nurses and health care workers, cleaners, packers and store persons, are manual handling injuries.

Because of the high potential for manual handling to cause lost time injuries, WorkSafe WA has identified this as one of seven areas to be given priority when our inspectors visit your workplace.

In their inspection, our inspectors will be looking for the key elements detailed overleaf. Following the same checklist yourself will help you identify any shortcomings in your procedures or training and correct or update them; thus getting you started on meeting your health and safety requirements.

In looking at safety in relation to manual handling and all workplace safety matters, please remember the three ThinkSafe steps:

- spot the hazard;
- assess the risk; and
- make the changes.

A good start will be to obtain the latest version of the [Code of practice for manual handling](#) (PDF 1.02mb). This is an important reference with strategies to help employers find (or design) effective solutions to manual handling issues.

Electrical safety

A worker received a serious electric shock and burns to his left hand when installing a second-hand post mix soft drink dispenser at a hotel. There was no residual current device (RCD) and the installation manual was not followed.

Incidents with electricity are usually caused by a lack of experience, training or supervision, broken equipment or dangerous work conditions, absence of an RCD and installation and repairs being undertaken by an unqualified repairer. The leading cause of injury in the hospitality and tourism industry is frayed or broken cords.

What should you watch out for?

- frayed or broken electrical cords
- overloaded power boards
- very long leads
- water around plugs & equipment
- overheating machines
- broken machines which have not been removed
- items restricting access to power points
- socket not RCD protected

Safety and health tips for laundry staff

Laundry workers work in situations where they may be working with heavy loads and potentially infectious materials. During the course of their work they may suffer from sore feet, eye strain, heat stress, and occupational overuse injury.

Some changes in your workplace can help reduce these problems and include:

Reducing the risk of lifting injuries by:

- Eliminating or reducing the need to lift, lower carry or other wise handle heavy bags;
- Using smaller bags for soiled laundry;

Reducing fatigue from standing:

- Use sit-stand stools at standing stations;
- Use anti-fatigue matting or shoe insoles if standing or walking a lot

Reducing the risk of infection:

- Provide preventative infection control policies and procedures;
- Provide information and training about infectious hazards and control practices

What are the risks

The major safety issues in the hospitality industry are:

- manual handling;
- slips trips and falls;
- hazardous substances and biological allergen;
- falls from heights;
- machinery guarding; and
- mobile plant

SAFETY FOR PEOPLE with language or literacy issues

As with any workers, employers of workers with language and literacy issues are required under the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 to provide a safe system of work in which workers are not exposed to hazards.

The Act does not require people to speak or read English, but it does place a duty of care on the employer, or person in control of the workplace, to ensure workers understand the hazards associated with their jobs and are competent to perform the work.

Consideration of a worker's level of understanding of written or verbal information should be factored into the induction process. This may mean translating information, such as MSDS.s, Job Safety Analysis forms and work instructions into the person's first language, using multi-lingual or picture signage in the workplace and using interpreters during training and instruction.

When visiting workplaces, WorkSafe inspectors will check that safe systems of work are in place for everyone in the workplace.

Regular updates on OSH

Recently WorkSafe has introduced a service that provides information on occupational safety and health direct to your email. By subscribing to these bulletins you can receive information that is specific to your areas of interest.

Would you like to subscribe to receive this service? Go to www.worksafe.wa.gov.au →services→mailing lists

Slips, trips and falls - hospitality industry

An employee of a café suffered a serious fracture to her ankle when she slipped on a flattened cardboard carton, which had been placed on the floor. The floor had just been cleaned by staff close to the end of the day and the cardboard was put down to maintain the cleanliness of the floor.

Factors

- The floor was wet and slippery;
- The cardboard presented a surface likely to lead to a slip or trip injury;
- Floor was cleaned whilst employees were still using the facility to serve customers; and
- The cardboard had been laid down in an area where staff regularly had to walk in the course of their work.

Recommendations

- Flattened cardboard cartons should not be placed on floors where persons are likely to be working;
- Floor cleaning to take place at the end of the day when service to customers has ceased; and
- Floor of the workplace should have an unbroken and slip resistant surface free from any obstruction that may cause a person to trip or fall. (Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 3.18).

Checklists

Manual handling-lifting safety checklist			
Check	yes	no	n/a
Access to shelves, storage areas, etc. is not obstructed			
Store rooms and cool rooms are organised to reduce risks, i.e. heavier items stored at waist height or bottom (as appropriate), lighter and infrequently used items stored at top shelves			
Work benches, dishwashers and other work surfaces are at good height to reduce poor posture			
Adequate access is provided to contents of cupboards. Contents can be accessed easily. No heavy items (e.g. drums of oil) are stored high			
Adequate systems are in place to ensure heavy pots of liquid such as water or oil are not carried, e.g. contents is transferred into smaller containers and trolleys are in place			
A risk assessment in relation to manual handling has been conducted.			
Where practicable, trolleys are available and used.			
Ramps are in place in areas where trolleys are used to go from one level to another level			
Clean plates are carried in small numbers and over short distances. Where practicable spring- loaded trolleys are in use			
Plates are stored in an adequate position (consider reaching, twisting, bending postures)			
Trolleys are available and used for carrying and lifting beer kegs			
Practical control measures are in place to reduce or eliminate handling heavy items. For instance smaller bags are purchased, bins with wheels are in place			
Employees, supervisors and managers have received adequate training in manual handling activities, covering all the requirements in the Code of Practice for Manual Handling			

Kitchen safety checklist			
Check	yes	no	n/a
Adequate guarding has been provided to plant or equipment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dough mixer is provided with an interlocked guard - Double roll blades meat mincer is provided with an interlocked guard - Cool room fans have been provided with adequate guards 			
Slicer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written instructions (or operators manual) are provided in relation to the safe dismantling of the slicer and cleaning of the slicer blade - Cut resistant gloves are provided for use when dismantling the slicer or cleaning the slicer blade 			
Handling of oil <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oil, used in deep fat fryers, is cooled down before handling for disposal - To reduce slip hazard, smaller container/bucket is used and covered with a lid 			
Baffle system is in place between the hot plate and the deep fryer			
Cleaning of range hoods/extraction equipment is conducted on regular basis (fire risk)			
Arrangements in place with contractors for allowing maintenance of range hoods/ extraction systems at adequate times (not during cooking of foods, etc.)			
Safe knife handling procedures are in place (e.g. storage of knives, carrying knives, sharpening of knives, cutting on stable surface, carrying knives with blade downwards)			
Employees are trained in the safe use of knives and safe working practices when sharpening knives			

THINKSAFE
WORKSAFE

Electricity safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Electrical installations are installed, constructed, maintained and tested to minimise the risk of electric shock or fire			
Components on the switchboard are clearly marked			
The switchboard is free of any obstructions			
Hand held portable equipment is protected by a non-portable residual current device (RCD)			
Switchboard or fixed sockets are marked where RCD is provided			
A testing program is in place for RCD's			
Flexible cords and extension cords are used in a safe manner (e.g. not lying across walkways)			
Plugs, sockets, extension leads and power boards are in good condition and protected from damage (e.g. not damaged, not overloaded)			
Electrical installations are protected from damage that would increase the risk of electric shock or fire, for instance a switchboard cover is provided			
Domestic type double adaptors are not used in a commercial environment			

Hazardous substances safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
The register of hazardous substances is complete and current. The register includes a contents list and material safety data sheets (MSDS) for all hazardous substances, such as cleaning products, used from time to time at the workplace. The MSDS are < 5 years old			
The register of hazardous substances is readily available for employees			
The outcome of the risk assessment for all hazardous substances is recorded in the hazardous substances register			
Decanted bottles containing hazardous or other substances are labelled			
Practicable control measures are in place to reduce risks relating to hazardous substances For instance, substitute hazardous substances for non-hazardous substances, use substances in accordance with MSDS, do not use oven cleaner in spray bottles, ensure adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided and used			
PPE for use with hazardous substances is maintained and in good working order			
Training has been provided to employees working with hazardous substances. Training includes potential health risk and toxic effects, control measures to minimise risk, correct use of methods to reduce exposure, correct care and use PPE			
A record of hazardous substance training is kept at the workplace			

Falls from height safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Edge protection is provided where required			
Safe access is provided to (storage) areas such as mezzanine floors			

THINKSAFE
WORKSAFE

Slips and trips safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Floors, stairs and ramps have unbroken and slip resistant surface			
Floors, stairs and ramps are free from obstructions that may cause a person to trip or fall			
Outside floor surfaces are free from potholes and other obstructions			
Adequate drainage is in place in wet areas			
Clean as you go policy in place to reduce slip hazards in kitchen, bars and other areas			
Frequency and standard of cleaning is adequate to eliminate slip hazards in kitchen			
Safe system for cleaning floors are in place, i.e. mopped last, so no-one walks over wet floor			
Drains and plumbing is not leaking causing slip hazard - check under sinks, dishwasher			
Area around fat disposal drum is kept in clean condition (no slip hazards)			
Access and egress to and from kitchen is safe. For instance, the risk of collision is reduced through a window in the door, the doors are marked as "IN and OUT", staff is trained, etc.			
Small changes in floor levels (e.g. at edge of tiles, at doorways, exiting cool room) do not create a slip or trip hazard and are readily visible. For instance high visibility strip at edge where applicable			
Warning signs are available and erected near wet floors and spills			
Hand rails and guard rails are provided on stairs and ramps			
Slip resistant and enclosed footwear is required (dress code)			

Mobile powered plant safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Mobile plant have been maintained			
Records are kept of maintenance, alterations and inspections			
Forklift operators hold a high risk work licence for forklift operation			
Pre-start safety check of mobile plant is carried out in accordance to manufactures' instructions.			
Mobile plant is in good working order (seat, lights, steering, controls, horn, tyres, gas cylinder, warning signals, brakes, mast, chains, hoses, counterweight, control labels, tynes)			
Load chart is provided and legible			
Seatbelt and rollover protection is provided where required.			
Work area is organised for the safety of the mobile plant operator and pedestrians			
Keys are not left behind in unattended mobile plant.			
All terrain vehicles helmets are provided and worn.			

THINKSAFE
WORKSAFE

Emergency procedures safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
An evacuation procedure to be followed in the event of a fire or other emergency is provided			
The evacuation procedure and a diagram of the workplace (showing the exits) are displayed in a prominent location			
Emergency egress enables safe egress in event of an emergency (e.g. doors are not obstructed)			
Exit signs have been provided and are maintained			
Portable fire extinguishers have been provided and maintained			
A fire blanket is available where deep fat fryers are in use			
An adequately stocked first aid kit is provided at a central location			
An adequate number of people have been trained in first aid, having regard to the types of hazards and number of people in the workplace			
Procedures are in place for isolated employees (means of communication are available and procedures for regular contact are in place with isolated employees)			

Violence and aggression safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Employees have received information, instruction and training in relation to dealing with violence and aggression (including hold ups, cash handling, difficult customers)			
Procedures are in place in relation to violence and aggression			
Procedures are in place in relation to cash handling			
Procedures are in place in relation to hold-ups (including post-hold up procedures)			
An adequate number of security staff is provided (where applicable)			
Security staff are adequately trained			
Staff are escorted to car after evening shift, where applicable			

Sharps and body fluids safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Procedures are in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding contact and safe handling of used needles and syringes, body fluids, etc. Immediate first aid response after incidents of exposure to blood or other body fluids/ substances from a sharps injury or splashing onto mucous membranes or broken skin 			
Handling of needles and syringes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impermeable sharps containers designated for the disposal of needles are provided and used Tongs for handling used needles and syringes are provided and used if required 			
Employees have received training in relation to infectious diseases and viruses. Training includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handling of sharps including used needles and syringes Cleaning up body fluids, including vomit and urine Immediate first aid after incidents of exposure to blood or other body fluids/ substances from a sharps injury or splashing onto mucous membranes or broken skin 			
Employees have received training in relation to cleaning up broken glass (e.g. use gloves, throw out cleaning cloth containing glass)			

Employer provided accommodation safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Is employee accommodation - that is not covered by a tenancy agreement or lease like arrangement - provided? If YES, safety and health matters have been adequately addressed (premises is maintained; employees are not exposed to hazards)			

Induction and new workers safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Induction and training is provided in relation to emergency/evacuation procedures			
Information and training is provided in relation to hazard and accident reporting			
Safety induction training is provided to new and young employees in relation to hazards in the workplace			
Information and training in the use, maintenance and storage of personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided			
Adequate supervision is in place to ensure that new and young workers are working in accordance with safety instructions			
The risk of injury or harm to (young) visitors is reduced by means appropriate for the workplace and the type of work activity			

Other issues safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Reportable accidents have been notified to WorkSafe			
Lost time injuries or diseases, accidents and notified hazards have been investigated			
Workplace facilities (e.g. toilets, wash basins, other facilities) are in a clean conditions			
Portable ladders comply with Australian Standards (AS 1892.1 for metal ladders and AS 1892.2 (for wooden ladders)			
Gas cylinders are secured. Not stored near ignition sources			
Safe work procedures are in place for changing gas cylinders			
Outdoor gas patio heaters and LPG cylinders are not used or stored indoors			
Personal protective equipment is provided without any cost to employees			

**THINKSAFE
WORKSAFE**

Information to help you meet the OSH laws

The WorkSafe website contains a number of publications which may assist you in making your workplace a safer place. Go to the WorkSafe website www.worksafe.wa.gov.au

Code of practice

- Control of noise in the music entertainment industry
- First aid, workplace amenities and personal protective clothing
- Management of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis at workplaces
- Manual handling
- Prevention and control of legionnaires disease
- The prevention of falls at workplaces
- Violence aggression and bullying at work
- Working hours
- Working hours risk management guidelines

Guidance note

- Alcohol and other drugs at the workplaces
- Dealing with bullying at work (a guide for workers)
- Formal Consultative Processes
- General duty of care in Western Australian workplaces
- Plant in the workplace
- Preparing for emergency evacuations at the workplace
- Prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning
- Provision of information on hazardous substances (MSDS)
- Safe movement of vehicles at workplaces
- Working alone
- Working safely with forklifts

Bulletin

- Employer provided accommodation and general duty of care
- Food preparation mixer guarding
- Gloves-selection use and maintenance
- Machine guarding
- Manual handling - cafe and restaurant
- New licence for high risk work
- Slips trips falls (cafe and restaurant industry)
- Tips for investigating accidents and incidents

Guides

- Priority area checklists
- The first step
- The next step
- Application guide for a national certificate of competency
- Armed hold-ups and cash handling

Regular updates on OSH

WorkSafe has introduced a service that provides information on occupational safety and health direct to your email. By subscribing to these bulletins you can receive information that is specific to your areas of interest.

Would you like to subscribe to receive this service? Go to www.worksafe.wa.gov.au →services→mailing lists

**THINKSAFE
WORKSAFE**