

SECTION 3.0

Health and Safety

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3.1 Legislation

All members of the cleaning services team have responsibilities to conform and respect all aspects of Health and Safety legislation. Managers have a key responsibility to make sure their department functions within the parameters of legislation (**see Appendix 5**) and that staff are trained and assessed in these issues. Staff have a responsibility to make sure they follow instructions, in accordance with local policy, and not place themselves or others in danger (also refer to **Important Notes** in Section 5.0).

Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a legal responsibility on everyone to work in a way that is safe. Members of the public who enter a workplace as contractors, employees or visitors must not be exposed to any Health and Safety risks during the course of their business.

The Act also states that all employees who are working within the organisation at all times take reasonable care for themselves and others. Employees are responsible for abiding by their organisation's health and safety policies and procedures.

Everyone is responsible for Health and Safety whilst at work!

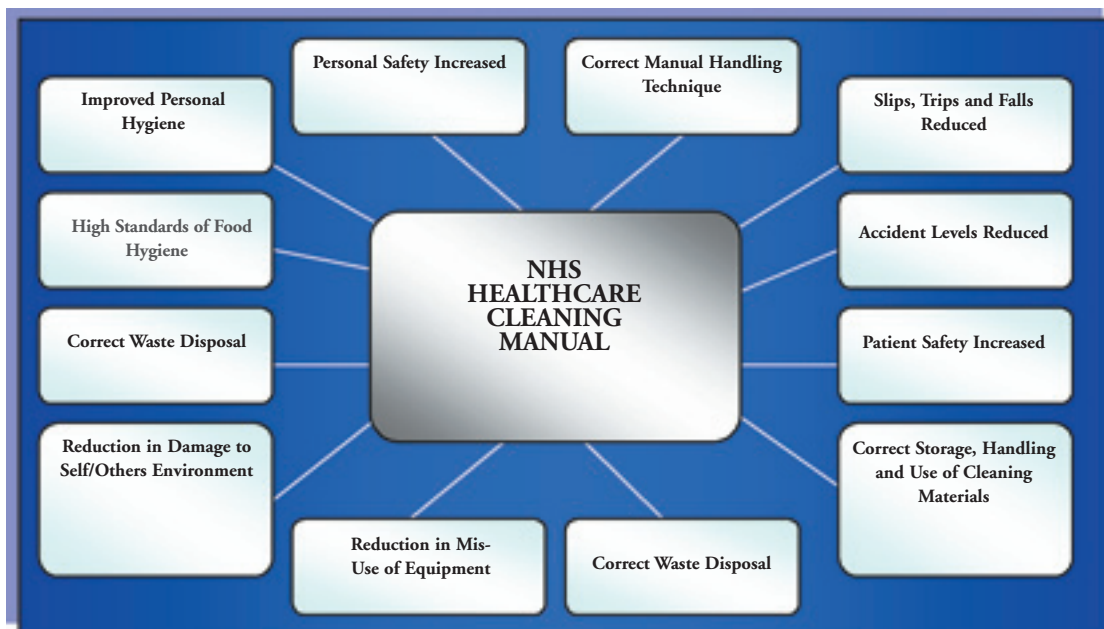
3.2 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

The Regulation's aim is to reduce exposure to hazardous substances to acceptable levels, in order to minimise risks to health.

- The policy on Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) is part of the Trust's Health and Safety policy.
- The COSHH safety data sheets and product handling sheets must be provided for all products by the respective company. This information must be assessed by the Manager and a register of substances placed with their completed assessment sheets and made available for staff.

- It is the responsibility of the Manager that all staff in the cleaning services department are aware of and understand the COSHH policy and are instructed and trained in the use of cleaning products.
- Summary COSHH information relating to the day to day chemicals used within the cleaning services department should be available locally in each functional area.

Some of the key issues associated with Health & Safety as set out in the following schematic and reviewed further in the Chapter -



3.3 Health and Safety Guide

a) Personal Safety

Every employee must accept a degree of responsibility for his or her personal safety. Failure to comply with policies and procedures may contribute to negligence. Managers must ensure that matters of personal safety are fully explained to staff at interview and during training.

REMEMBER Most accidents are caused by one person and happen to one person

Always ensure to:

- Take reasonable precautions in safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of yourself and others who may be affected by your work. You must co-operate with your employer by working safely and efficiently
- Observe all Health and Safety rules and procedures as laid down by the organisation and use all health and safety equipment provided
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety, hygiene and welfare
- Report any faulty equipment to your manager/supervisor immediately
- Alert management/supervisor to a potential hazard that you have noticed and report all incidents that may lead to injury, illness or damage
- Display warning signs when cleaning floors, ensuring all signs are visible
- Follow manufacturers' instructions when using cleaning agents and equipment
- Not use cleaning equipment and materials unless training has been given.

b) General Health and Safety Rules

- Follow specific rules that apply to your work areas
- Wear safety/protective equipment as specified for designated areas/tasks
- Report and wipe up any spillage. Always display a warning sign
- Walk when in the building – do not run
- Use authorised access and exit routes
- Always stack items safely and place things where they belong
- Lift items correctly
- Disconnect electrical apparatus from the power supply before cleaning machinery
- Check that all equipment is safe before use and has an up to date PAT. Report any defects to management/supervisor immediately, do not use, label and remove
- Do not misuse equipment
- Keep all work areas as clean as possible, tidy up as you work
- Place rubbish in the appropriate colour-coded waste bags and bins provided and do not allow rubbish to accumulate
- Observe and use the recommended colour-coding systems.

NOTE A Portable Appliance Test (PAT) is a requirement for an annual safety check on all electrical appliances classed as portable or transportable, for example, items that have plugs fitted for mains operation.

c) Protective Clothing

Suitable protective clothing must be provided and it is the responsibility of all staff to wear this clothing whilst at work.

Examples of protective clothing are;

- Overalls – Dress or Trousers and a Tunic
- Disposable aprons
- Rubber gloves, colour-coded/disposable
- Cotton glove liners

Failure to wear the correct clothing may result in;

- Damage to personal clothing.
- Personal injury.
- Spread of infection.
- Skin contact with cleaning agents.

Staff are also encouraged to wear flat comfortable closed-toed shoes;

- To protect feet and for personal comfort.
- Job entails a lot of standing/walking – personal comfort.

d) Jewellery and Make-Up

In the interest of safety, hygiene and image of the organisation it is advisable not to wear;

- Long necklaces, beads, earrings, bracelets and rings could present or be a hazard for example, getting caught in machinery or equipment.
- Excessive or outrageous hair and make-up may present the wrong image.

e) Accidents

Staff must be trained to;

1. Report all potential hazards and accidents immediately to a supervisor.
2. Seek medical advice/attention from Occupational Health, or the Accident and Emergency Department.
3. Complete an accident form immediately after the accident.

If in doubt, ask a supervisor.

f) Personal Hygiene

- Proper standards of personal hygiene are essential to prevent the potential risk of cross infection to staff, patients, visitors and vice-versa. Daily bathing and the wearing of clean clothes is essential.
- Even healthy people carry micro-organisms in the nose, throat, skin and bowels some that can be responsible for food poisoning.
- All staff must take every precaution to ensure that food is not contaminated by micro-organisms.
- All staff with communicable infections, for example diarrhoea, and vomiting, influenza, chickenpox, must report to the occupational health department.

g) Food Hygiene

- Food hygiene is much more than cleanliness, it involves all measures necessary to ensure the safety and wholesomeness of food during preparation, processing, manufacturing, packaging, storage, distribution handling and offering for sale or supply to the consumer.
- High standards of personal hygiene must be achieved at all times by those responsible for food and beverage preparation and service.

Note: All food handlers should be trained.

h) Kitchen Hygiene

Poor hygiene standards in kitchens can lead to food poisoning and other cross-infection risks. **Avoid these risks by:**

- Keeping all equipment and work surfaces hygienic and clean, using the correct cleaning fluids and water temperatures.
- To prevent any injuries whilst washing dishes, be aware that the sink may contain harmful/sharp objects
- Clean as you go.
- Store equipment in its appropriate storage area.

If in doubt ask a supervisor

3.4 Safe Manual Handling

Training must be given in the correct method of lifting to prevent strains and possibly more serious internal injuries and it is interesting to note that some Trusts have adopted a 'no-lifting' policy. Staff with any medical problem that would place them at risk when lifting must be identified.

a) Lifting

General guidelines:

1. Assess the risks and make decisions to act in the interest of Health and Safety.
2. Lift within your own capability. If necessary use two people for lifting heavy loads.
3. Stand close to the object, keep feet apart ensuring footing is secure – keep your balance.
4. Bend your knees, keep your back straight, get a good grip and keep weight close to your body.
5. Lift gradually, straighten knees and stand up using leg muscles, avoid quick and jerky movements.

b) Pushing and Pulling

General Guidelines:

1. Get a firm grip of the object.
2. Keep your back as straight as possible.
3. Brace your feet for maximum leg power.
4. Bend your knees – best distribution of body weight.

c) Carrying

General guidelines:

- Keep load close to your body.
- Avoid twisting and turning your body, change direction by moving your feet.
- Do not change grip whilst carrying the object.
- Face the spot on which the object is to rest when placed down.

3.5 Cleaning Equipment

a) Machinery

There are two main potential hazards when operating machinery:

1. Machine operated by untrained staff
2. Machine is defective or faulty and in use

For safety make sure:

- Never operate a piece of machinery unless you have been thoroughly trained to do so by a member of Domestic management or supervisory staff.
- Never operate faulty machinery or machinery with an out of date PAT label.
- When using electrical equipment, a circuit breaker should be used if appropriate
- Report any machinery defects to your supervisor, who will arrange for that piece of machinery to be removed and repaired. It is the responsibility of an approved engineer to repair and maintain machinery. Untrained or unauthorised staff must not undertake any form of repair.

If in doubt ask a supervisor

b) Safety Precautions

All machinery is a potential hazard if not used and maintained correctly. **Do not:**

- Leave unattended machines connected to the power supply, and switched on.
- Leave unattended machines where they could be a source of danger to others.
- Use without appropriate warning signs position effectively
- Allow excessive lengths of cable to trail across walk ways.
- Attempt to remove parts of the machine whilst machine is connected to the power supply and switched on. Always switch off and unplug prior to dismantling.

If in doubt ask a supervisor

c) Domestic Equipment

Managers and other appropriate staff have a responsibility to:

- Maintain equipment in good working order.
- Ensure all equipment is kept clean and hygienic to eliminate the risk of cross infection.
- Report all defects and allow repair/replacements to be carried out.
- Always put equipment away clean as soon as you are finished with it. Never leave it lying around where it could cause an accident.

If in doubt ask a supervisor

d) Dangerous Kitchen Equipment

- All kitchen equipment is potentially dangerous and should always be handled with care.
- All kitchen equipment (electrical) should be inspected regularly by a qualified person and possess an up to date PAT label.
- Report all defects and allow repair/replacements to be carried out.
- Do not attempt to clean hotplates/trolleys/ovens/grills whilst they are switched on. Allow to cool first.
- Protect hands whilst removing items from heated equipment.
- When operating boilers keep hands well away from water-jet to avoid splashes.
- Operate dishwashers in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and never attempt to open whilst in operation.

If in doubt ask a supervisor