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1A | Emergency and evacuation procedures

Emergency and evacuation procedures must be implemented so that everyone knows what to do when a situation in the warehouse is unsafe.

A team leader or supervisor must ensure emergency and evacuation procedures are applied in the warehouse. To do this, they must ensure workers understand what the procedures mean and how to follow them correctly. This may involve explaining the procedures in a staff meeting, showing staff where alarms are located and providing time for workers to practise following the procedures.

Understand procedures

When you understand emergency and evacuation procedures, you will know exactly what to do if an unsafe or dangerous situation occurs.

You also need to know the location of and how to use safety alarms, manifests, emergency shut-off systems and emergency communications systems.



Examples of emergency and evacuation procedures that must be implemented

Fire



Fire procedures explain what to do in case there is a fire.

The procedures require workers to:

- follow instructions to leave the worksite immediately and safely
- alert supervisors and fire services
- ensure the safety of all personnel before taking action to protect property
- access and use firefighting equipment if they have been trained to do so.

Evacuation



Emergency evacuation procedures must be implemented in case the workplace becomes unsafe. 'Evacuate' means to leave the worksite immediately and safely. Workers may need to be evacuated if there is a flood or fire, fumes or high winds. All workers must be trained to follow the evacuation procedure.

Location of safety alarms

Alarms are used for specific emergencies.

Different alarms are used for different emergency situations. When implementing emergency and evacuation procedures, the information must include where the alarms are located, and how and when to use them. Knowing this saves time and may reduce harm or injury to yourself and others.



Examples of different alarms



Fire alarm

Fire alarms are used when there is a fire inside or outside of the warehouse.



Emergency communication

Emergency communication systems are used if an incident needs to be communicated to your supervisor.

Alarms are used when there is:

- a fire
- an incident
- an injury
- a medical emergency
- an emergency shutdown.



Emergency shutdown

Emergency shut-down systems are used when the flow of water, electricity or gas must be interrupted.



Safety alarm

Safety alarms are used to alert workers that an incident has occurred.

Watch this video [00m:31s] about safety alarms.



Oxidising hazard



Substances with this symbol may make a fire worse.

Safety measures to take include:

- using correct PPE
- keeping the substance away from heat
- storing the substance away from combustible (flammable) products.

Environmental hazard



Environmental hazards pose a danger to the natural environment; for example, chemical spills in drains or waterways. They may be toxic and can cause illness or death.

Safety measures to take include:

- using correct PPE
- keeping the area secure and limiting access to it
- notifying authorities about the hazard, if necessary.

Corrosive substance



Corrosive substances are chemicals that can cause damage to the skin, eyes, airways or digestive tract by corroding it (eating it away).

Safety measures to take include:

- using correct PPE
- having adequate airflow in the work area
- checking containers holding corrosive material for damage
- checking the storage temperature.

Severe health hazard



These hazards include those that are aspiratory or respiratory (from breathing in), and those that are carcinogens (causing cancer) or mutagens (causing mutations).

Health hazards may be a virus or a toxin that can cause illness or death.

Safety measures to take include:

- following special instructions before use
- using correct PPE
- following decontamination procedures
- using a hand-washing procedure
- keeping the area secure
- avoiding breathing in dust, fumes, gases, mist, vapours and spray
- having adequate airflow in the work area.

Mechanically operated lifting procedures

You may be able to use lifting equipment to help you lift and move items.

Procedures for using mechanically operated lifting equipment will tell you how to load the equipment, stack items, balance a load, and pull or push the equipment.

Mechanically operated equipment may require safety operating procedures relating to:

- appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
- equipment inspection
- fuel handling and storage
- use of equipment.

Load-shifting procedures

Load-shifting procedures are implemented to control injuries and damage to equipment.

Load-shifting procedures are used to eliminate hazards involved with using load-shifting equipment. Load-shifting procedures may apply to:

- shifting bulk goods
- relocating a load
- repositioning unstable items.

Risks of using manually operated equipment

A risk is the likelihood that a hazard will cause harm or injury.

Risk of harm is graded in terms of being acceptable, moderate, substantial, high or very high. Risk control refers to reducing or eliminating the chance that a hazard will cause harm. A hazard is something that may cause harm or injury. Procedures are implemented to manage the hazard and reduce the risk of harm to a worker.

Report unsafe situations

Reports must be clear, accurate, factual and timely.

Procedures for reporting hazards in the workplace may involve verbal reports (telling someone), completing a written formal report or raising the issue at a WHS meeting. Reports need to be clear and contain facts. Dangerous situations need to be verbally reported to your supervisor. Other situations can be reported by completing a form and giving it to your supervisor or HSR.



Examples of situations where the correct reporting procedure must be followed

Unsafe situations



Unsafe situations occur when there is a risk or chance that you or someone else will be hurt. An unsafe situation affects not only you, but also the people you work with. Unsafe situations should be reported verbally to your supervisor immediately.

Fire hazards



Fire hazards are dangerous and must be dealt with. You should report these hazards to your supervisor as soon as possible. If the fire hazard is urgent, report it to your supervisor verbally. If you have addressed the fire hazard, complete a hazard report form to give to your supervisor.

Broken or damaged equipment or fittings



Broken or damaged equipment can be reported by completing a hazard report form. The form may include details of the damage, who it was reported to, the action that was taken and whether the equipment or fittings are fixed.



Read the following workplace example to see how the concepts you have learned are applied in a real-life situation.

Workplace example for Topic 1

Marco is the supervisor of a warehouse that delivers goods to retail outlets. He supervises the work of 12 team members who are responsible for receiving, replenishing, picking and despatching goods. One of his responsibilities is to ensure WHS procedures are implemented and monitored.

Marco needs to make sure WHS information is readily available to his team. He stores information on the company's intranet, and keeps printed copies of the procedures at the team's work desk so they can be accessed easily.

Marco decides that the best way to implement WHS procedures would be a face-to-face meeting. He sets up a meeting and gives all workers a copy of the WHS procedures. Marco asks them to practise the correct manual handling techniques and identify WHS signs and signals. They discuss how to identify hazards in their work area and how to manage them.

Marco decides to monitor the WHS procedures by observing the workers and scheduling regular WHS meetings to make sure everyone understands the new procedures and why it is important to follow them.

Watch the workplace example video [01m:09s] [here](#).



Summary of Topic 1

1. When workers understand emergency and evacuation procedures, they will know exactly what to do if an unsafe or dangerous situation occurs.
2. The company's WHS policies, procedures and programs need to be accessible.
3. It is critical that warning signs and signals are understood.
4. Manual handling refers to an action that requires a person to lift, carry, move, push or pull an item.
5. A risk is the likelihood that a hazard will cause harm or injury.
6. Work health and safety (WHS) is about doing tasks safely.
7. A code of practice is an industry guideline written to manage the activities undertaken in a workplace.
8. Reports must be clear, accurate, factual and timely.
9. Safety procedures relating to transportation of goods must be implemented and all workers must clearly understand and follow the requirements.



Topic 2 | What you need to do to implement and monitor WHS procedures

All existing and potential hazards in your workplace should be identified and reported. Your company's hazard identification and reporting systems should be simple, flexible and responsive so that the potential for harm can be quickly assessed.

Assessments should be action-oriented and should show the appropriate action to take to minimise and control the hazard.

In this topic
you will learn
about how to:

2A Follow procedures

2B Communicate effectively

2C Complete
documentation

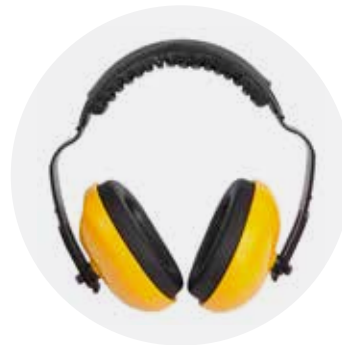
2D Implement WHS
procedures

Extreme temperatures



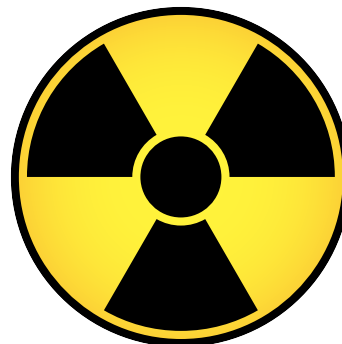
Heat can cause burns, heat stroke or fatigue; cold can cause hypothermia or frost bite.

Noise



Exposure to loud noise can cause permanent hearing damage.

Radiation



Ultraviolet light, welding arc flashes, microwaves and lasers can cause burns, cancer or blindness.

Psychosocial hazards



Effects of work-related stress, bullying, violence and work-related fatigue can be psychological hazards.

Information adapted from How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice, Safe Work Australia

Minimise hazards

Hazard control procedures outline the actions you must take to minimise, control or eliminate a hazard.

If a hazardous event has occurred, this means that existing control measures have failed. Control measures may need to be reviewed and adjusted, or new methods may need to be implemented. A team leader or supervisor needs to make sure that existing control measures are effective, appropriate to the hazard and applied at all times. This may mean that maintenance of housekeeping equipment, such as industrial cleaners or sweepers is built into everyday activities.

The appropriate use of PPE may be monitored to ensure workers are complying with WHS regulations and industry requirements. This minimises the chance of harm occurring from unclean, broken or ineffective equipment.

Actions to minimise hazards include:

- conducting a regular workplace audit using a hazard checklist
- monitoring WHS incident records
- using a system where hazards can be reported on a day-to-day basis
- monitoring workers' use of hazard control measures
- using the hierarchy of control to minimise risks
- selecting and using appropriate PPE.

Hazard control register

A hazard control register is used to summarise and document hazards, prioritise risks and the controls required for managing the hazard.

A team leader or supervisor should check to make sure the hazard control register reflects information used in the hierarchy of control.

The register should include the following information:

- Location
- Date
- Hazard
- What is the harm that the hazard could cause?
- What is the likelihood that the harm would occur?
- What is the level of risk?
- How effective are the current controls?
- What further controls are required?
- How will the control be implemented? (action by, due date, when completed)

Information adapted from:

Commonwealth of Australia 2011, How to manage work health and safety risks: Code of practice, available from <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/manage-whs-risks-cop>, viewed 12/10/2016.