

HEALTH & SAFETY NOTICE



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HEALTH & SAFETY IN OFFICES

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HEALTH & SAFETY IN OFFICES

INTRODUCTION

1. This Health and Safety Notice should be read and understood by all employees of Vacman Cleaning Ltd.
2. This Health and Safety Notice covers health and safety in offices where administration, secretarial or book and paperwork are carried out, and where no machinery beyond that used for writing, calculating, printing and copying e.g. (typewriters, computer terminals, personal computers, calculators, printers and photocopiers etc.) are used or stored.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

3. Under the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (Section 2), Workplace Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations 1992. The employer has a duty to ensure the health safety & welfare at work of all employees
4. The Managing Director will be responsible for making whatever arrangements considered necessary to ensure the health safety & welfare at work of all staff.
5. For Offices to comply with health and safety requirements several statutory regulations must be complied with. Some regulations are dealt with in separate Health and Safety Notices. To help implement the regulations this Health and Safety Notice provides the guidance required to maintain a healthy and safe office.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

6. Under the Workplace Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations 1992 there are many requirements which apply to offices. Vacman accepts its responsibilities for those requirements that will facilitate healthy, safe and comfortable offices. The main requirements are listed below;
 - 6.1 Ventilation "*effective and suitable provision shall be made to ensure that every enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air*".
 - 6.2 Temperature in indoor workplaces "*during working hours, the temperature in all workplaces shall be reasonable*".

The minimum legal temperature in workrooms is 16⁰C (after the first hour) unless the work involves severe physical effort, in which case it must be at least 13⁰C. The Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) recommends that the temperature of workrooms is between 20⁰C and 23⁰C and this can be reduced to 18⁰ C - 20⁰ C if light physical work is undertaken. CIBSE also recommend that for any workroom the maximum temperature that should not be exceeded is 27⁰C.

If a workplace temperature exceeds 23⁰C and the occupants of the workplace find

the conditions uncomfortable the Management shall make every reasonable effort to alleviate the situation. Actions to reduce high temperature may involve fans, permanent or temporary shading, the supply of cooling drinks or relief away from the workplace.

If a workplace temperature falls below 20⁰C the Management shall make every reasonable effort to alleviate the situation. If the temperature remains below 16⁰C (after the first hour) immediate action will be required to raise the temperature to an acceptable level. Actions to raise the minimum temperature may involve provision of supplementary heating, draught proofing or alternative accommodation.

If the conditions cannot be improved for temperatures below the recommended minimum temperature of 20⁰C, or above the recommended maximum temperature of 23⁰C, the Manager should seek advice from the Managing Director.

If members of staff are working in areas where the temperature exceeds 30⁰C the management shall take the necessary steps to allow staff relief from the workplace for sufficient periods of time to alleviate any stress produced by excessive temperatures.

All offices will have a thermometer available for staff to measure office temperature. (This is a requirement under Regulation 7 of the Workplace [Health, Safety and Welfare] Regulations)

- 6.3 Lighting "*every workplace shall have suitable and sufficient lighting*". There are recommended minimum and maximum light levels for various office tasks outlined in the CIBSE lighting code of practice. Light levels can be measured with the use of a light meter.
- 6.4 Cleanliness and waste materials "*every workplace and the furniture, furniture fittings therein shall be kept sufficiently clean. The surfaces of the floors, walls and ceilings of all workplaces inside buildings shall be capable of being kept clean. So far as is reasonably practicable, waste materials shall not be allowed to accumulate in a workplace except in suitable receptacles*". Complaints should be made in the first instance to the line manager. The line manager should then raise the problem with the Cleaning Services Manager.

- 6.5 Room dimensions and space *"every room where persons work shall have sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space for the purpose of health, safety and welfare"*. Each person is entitled to a minimum capacity of working space (11 cubic metres), and a floor area of 3.66 square metres, or more if the ceiling is less than 3 metres high. Complaints should be made in the first instance to the line manager.
- 6.6 Condition of floors and traffic routes *"every floor in a workplace and the surface of every traffic route in a workplace shall be constructed such that the floor or surface of the traffic route is suitable for the purpose for which it is used"*.
- 6.7 Workstation & Seating. Guidance can be obtained from various HSE documents and British Standards and HSN-32.
- 6.8 For a more detailed interpretation of the Regulations summarised above reference should be made to the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Workplace Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations 1992 and The Shops Offices and Railway Premises Act 1963.

MANUAL HANDLING

- 7 According to the Health and Safety Executive, manual handling accidents are a major cause of time loss injuries. The Manual Handling Operating Regulations 1992 require that all manual handling tasks be assessed. There is a requirement that;
- 7.1 all tasks requiring manual handling will be assessed in accordance with the Manual Handling Health and Safety Notice HSN-34;
- 7.2 a manual handling assessor(s) is appointed and trained for each School/Directorate;
- 7.3 any assessment undertaken is acted upon;
- 7.4 manual handling tasks are eliminated where reasonably practicable through planning and design;
- 7.5 care is taken when lifting heavy or bulky materials or equipment. Help should be requested if the item being moved is heavy or so bulky that it obscures the vision of the carrier.

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE)

- 8 Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 requires that display screen equipment and its users are assessed. There is a requirement that;
- 8.1 Users of Display Screen Equipment are assessed in accordance with the Safe Operation of Display Screen Equipment Health and Safety Notice HSN-32;
- 8.2 a DSE assessor(s) is appointed;
- 8.3 any assessment undertaken is acted upon.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

- 9 The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992 require that work equipment be suitable, sufficient, used and maintained correctly. Management will need to ensure that;
 - 9.1 Office machinery is operated according to the manufacturer's instructions and relevant company rules;
 - 9.2 guards and covers must be kept in position unless removed by authorised personnel carrying out maintenance or other appropriate tasks;
 - 9.3 no one ever starts a machine unless they know how to stop it in emergency;
 - 9.4 repairs to any office equipment are only carried out by qualified people;
 - 9.5 adequate ventilation is provided for any office equipment that requires it;
 - 9.6 members of staff do not wear loose sleeves, ties, belts or dangling jewellery where there are exposed or unguarded moving parts.

ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

10. All fixed and portable electrical equipment has to conform to the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992 and must be wired in accordance with IEE Regulations (16th Edition). There is a requirement that;
 - 10.1 all portable & fixed electrical equipment will conform to the requirements of Electrical Safety HSN-18 and Portable Electrical Equipment Testing HSN-33 Health and Safety Notices;
 - 10.2 a person(s) is nominated and trained to test the portable electrical equipment;
 - 10.3 electrical equipment and associated plugs, cables etc. are inspected regularly in accordance with IEE code of practice and HSN-33;
 - 10.4 heaters and hot-running equipment must be kept clear of combustible materials and after use all electrical equipment is switched off. Wherever possible wall sockets should be switched off and plugs pulled out when a room is left empty, particularly at the end of a working day;
 - 10.5 food and drink taken at the workplace do not constitute a risk to personnel or equipment. If liquids are spilt into electrical equipment there is an enhanced risk of electric shock.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

11. The raw material for offices is paper. Paper is flammable and single sheets are easily ignited. Modern offices are full of electrical equipment that generate heat and have the potential to start fires. The best fire precaution is prevention. There is a need to ensure that;
 - 11.1 if personnel wish to smoke they only do so in designated areas (Vacman has a strict no smoking policy);
 - 11.2 paper is not stored next to electrical equipment and/or sources of heat.
 - 11.3 other items including cleaning fluids, photocopier toners etc. are stored and used correctly. COSHH assessments must be carried out for any hazardous substances

- used, HSN-19, and disposed of in accordance with HSN-37.
- 11.4 electrical circuits are never overloaded;
- 11.5 materials are never stored as to restrict the airflow through electrical equipment.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

- 12. Design the office layout with safety in mind. A tidy well laid out office will be more efficient and safe. There is a need to ensure that;
 - 12.1 there is adequate provision for the safe storage of all materials.
 - 12.2 shelves are at reasonable height and position to minimise stretching and lifting. Do not overload shelves. Appropriate step-ups, kick stools or steps are provided to enable safe access to high storage areas;
 - 12.3 materials or equipment must not be left where people may fall over them or so that they otherwise obstruct passageways. The storage of equipment and materials on the tops of cupboards or cabinets should be discouraged;
 - 12.4 where practicable filing cabinets should have interlocked draws to prevent the filing cabinet from falling forward. If they are not interlocked they should be fixed securely to the wall;
 - 12.5 cupboard doors and drawers are kept closed when not in use, to prevent injury to anyone;
 - 12.6 no one ever stands on rotating chairs or chairs of adjustable height. If step-ups, kick stools or steps are used to reach high shelves or cupboards then the steps must be of safe design and construction;
 - 12.7 personnel wear appropriate shoes;
 - 12.8 waste paper is disposed of in a bin or sack specifically for that purpose. Sharp objects, cans and bottles, whether of metal, glass or plastic, are put in suitably labelled receptacles;
 - 12.9 electrical, telephone and data cables are protected from heat and abrasion. They must be positioned so that no one can trip over them and/or inadvertently dislodge the equipment that they supply;
 - 12.10 sharp items, e.g. razor blades and knives; and pointed items e.g. staples, pins, drawing pins and tacks; should be kept separately in labelled containers to avoid small puncture wounds or lacerations;
 - 12.11 broken glass is picked up with brush and dustpan, not fingers. Splinters of glass remaining should be picked up with a damp paper towel to be disposed of immediately in the correct receptacle.

PROCEDURE TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS ON DISAGREEMENTS

- 13. In the event of a query or dispute arising over a health & safety matter in the office, further advice can be sought from the Managing Director.

TRAINING AND INFORMATION

14. Where a need is identified, health and safety training will be provided. It will be the responsibility of the line managers' to ensure that all appropriate members of staff receive training. Details on all health and safety training are available from the Managing Director.

Approved by:

Issued by:



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Managing Director

Date:/...../.....