

know risk

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Risk assessment checklist

Risk assessments are not difficult, but they do take time. It is sensible, therefore, to spread the load as far as is possible and for people to carry out risk assessments in their own particular area, where they best know about any hazards.

Because charities vary so much, it is difficult to be specific as to who should do what. However, as an example, the office manager should look at offices, the catering manager or head chef the supply of food and drink, the sales manager any retail outlets, the distribution manager the warehouse etc.

The process should be overseen and co-ordinated by the person who has overall responsibility for health and safety.

Systematically look at each area of the premises and note all of the hazards and risks, and any existing safety measures.

Note also any person who may be specifically at risk. You must then note any additional safety measures or 'controls' which will reduce those risks as far as possible. As well as the interior of the buildings, you must also look at the yards, car parks and other external areas and also events and activities away from your premises.

In order to help you, a checklist is given on the next page, of common hazards which you should look for in each area being assessed. If any of these hazards are present, then record them and what you need to do about them. Look for any other hazards which may not be included in the checklist, such as specific activities or pieces of equipment which may cause harm.

In addition to the risks arising from buildings you must also carry out risk assessments for activities away from your premises such as visits, outings and fund raising activities.

Risk assessment checklist

Accidents and First Aid

- Provision of First Aid equipment
- Persons with First Aid training
- Procedures to deal with accidents
- Transport arrangements to hospital
- Examine existing arrangements and assess what is needed

Fire safety

- Combustible materials, flammable liquids and accumulations of waste
- Heaters, smoking and other sources of heat
- Provision of fire exits, escape routes and signage
- Provision of fire detection equipment and fire fighting equipment
- Evacuation plans

Electrical safety

- Condition of fixed electrical installation, including switches and sockets
- Condition of portable electrical appliances, including leads and plugs
- Use of unauthorised electrical appliances and temporary wiring
- Mechanical damage to wiring

Gas safety

- Condition and maintenance arrangements for fixed gas boilers and heaters
- Condition and arrangements for use, including storage and changing of cylinders for portable Liquid Petroleum gas heaters

Control of hazardous substances

Internal

- Cleaning materials
- Paints, solvents, adhesives and other chemicals
- Types, amounts, storage arrangements
- Fumes and dusts
- Provision of personal protective equipment

External

- Pesticides, herbicides, petrol
- Types, amounts, storage arrangements
- Provision of personal protective equipment

Plant and machinery

Internal

- Woodworking machinery
- Metalworking machinery
- Lifts, hoists and other lifting equipment
- Ladders and scaffolds including storage and accessibility
- Display screen and computer equipment
- Any other machinery and equipment

External

- Forklift trucks
- Lawnmowers, hedgetrimmers, brushcutters etc.

Slips, trips and falls

Internal

- Loose carpets, rugs, mats and other floor coverings
- Loose and uneven tiles, stone paving and floorboards
- Trailing leads and other obstructions
- Spillages of water and other liquids
- Worn, steep and uneven steps and stairs
- Inadequate lighting, lack of handrails

External

- Uneven and poorly maintained yards, car parks, paths and steps
- Potholes, tree roots and unprotected drops
- Long grass and undergrowth
- Poor drainage of paths and growth of algae
- Inadequate lighting and lack of handrails

Lighting

Internal

- Adequacy of lighting
- Pay particular attention to stairs, steps, cellars and basements

External

- Paths, steps, drives, car parks, boiler room steps and entrances

Falls from a height

Internal

- Arrangements for light bulb changing
- Mezzanine floors
- Use of unsecured ladders
- Unprotected openings and walkways at high level

External

- Clearing of gutters and valleys
- Low parapets and balustrades

Food hygiene

- Extent of food preparation
- Nature of foods to be prepared and stored
- Areas used for food preparation
- Facilities for washing and preparation of foodstuffs
- Facilities for storage of foodstuffs
- Experience, training and competence of food handlers

Manual handling

- Moving and lifting of stock, plant and other equipment
- Numbers required
- Specialist equipment needed

Display screen equipment

- List all computer equipment
- Who uses it and for how long
- Check seating, workstation, screen, software

Hazardous buildings/glazing

- Loose brickwork, stonework, falling masonry, slates, tiles, gutters, flagpoles
- Detail any glass in windows below waist height and in doors or beside doors below shoulder height that is not of safety material or protected against breakage
- Narrow panes up to 250mm need not be included
- Check if any asbestos is present

Personal Safety

- Lone working
- Handling of cash
- Means of raising an alarm, summoning assistance

Other activities and hazards

- Events, exhibitions, work away, etc.
- Age-related hazards (children/elderly)
- Disability access/provision
- Fêtes, sponsored walks, fundraising activities
- Look for and note any other hazards that could cause someone harm, which are not included in the above checklist

This material is for information purposes only. It is not intended to give specific legal or risk management advice nor are any suggestions, checklists or action plans intended to include or address all possible risk management exposures or solutions.