

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS

Safety is a major concern for all businesses and while large business often sees itself as capable of managing its own risk, some smaller businesses have struggled to implement the new workplace safety laws. The following information is available only to ABL members.

DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- Consider safety issues when purchasing equipment or chemicals
- Plan to do jobs safely and think about safety of everyday work processes
- Discuss safety matters with employees
- Train employees in safe procedures
- Do workplace inspections regularly
- Act on all reports of hazards and injury
- Follow safety procedures
- Wear protective equipment provided – hearing, gloves etc
- Report hazards and injuries
- Participate in safety activities
- Keep work area clean and clean up spills
- Consider the safety of others

DON'T:

- Don't ignore safety issues until someone gets hurt
- Don't allow faulty equipment to be used
- Don't condone breaches of safety procedures
- Don't ignore hazards
- Don't remove guards from machines
- Don't operate faulty equipment
- Don't work at heights without fall protection (harness/safety line)
- Don't forget to consider the safety of others
- Don't take short cuts to get the job done quickly
- Don't block fire exits

TOP TEN OH&S ACTIONS

- 1.** A commitment by senior management to safety and understanding of the law
- 2.** Consultation and communication with employees on workplace safety
- 3.** Assign responsibilities and accountabilities for safety to managers and supervisors
- 4.** Develop a plan for implementing safety across the business
- 5.** Training for directors, managers, supervisors and employees
- 6.** Regular Workplace Safety Inspections
- 7.** Conduct risk assessments in every department
- 8.** Implement specific programs, for example first aid, machine guarding, manual handling, emergency evacuation, confined space entry, chemical safety and so on.
- 9.** Mandatory posters and signs
- 10.** Injury and accident reporting, rehabilitation and workers compensation management

FOR MORE INFORMATION..

- **ABL** has developed an OHS CD to respond to members' needs for assistance in complying to the September 1 changes in OHS legislation. The new laws require SMEs to implement risk management in the workplace, including assessment, consultation and training. Call **13 26 96** for more information.
- To help businesses with new changes in NSW legislation and to assist them in developing safe work practices, the above information was provided to ABL members as part of an *Occupational Health & Safety Wall Chart*.
- If you need professional assistance and advice in OH&S contact **ABL** on **13 26 96** or visit the website at www.australianbusiness.com.au/ohs
- Need daily information on OH&S issues that could affect your workplace? Go to www.workplaceohs.com.au and sign up for free 21 day trial for the latest news, research and opinion.
- Want to receive the workers compensation discount, that is the Small Business Premium Discount Scheme, then contact **ABL** on **13 26 96**.
- Do you have a legal problem with workers compensation or occupational health and safety? Contact **AB Lawyers** – Ph: **13 26 96** – or visit www.australianbusiness.com.au/ablawyers

GENERAL WORKPLACE SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The following is an occupational health & safety checklist to print out and use in your workplace. The checklist (for ABL members only) can be found in the OH&S website at www.australianbusiness.com.au/ohs

Print out this handy checklist and use it in your workplace.

GOOD ACTION COMMENTS

<p>1. Faulty Equipment a. Is any equipment faulty or in need of repair? b. Are safety devices such as guards in place and in working order?</p>			
<p>2. Emergency Procedures a) Risk from fire or other emergencies, such as chemical spill, assessed? b) Evacuation procedures developed to deal with emergencies? c) Staff trained in evacuation procedure? Exit signs and directions to exits? d) Exit doors easily opened from inside? e) Exits not blocked? Fire alarm system working? f) Extinguishers in place, clearly marked for type of fire, and serviced within six months? g) Fire drills practised? h) Staff trained in use of fire extinguishers? i) Are flammables away from sources of ignition?</p>			
<p>3. Electrical a) Plugs, cables, sockets, switches in good condition? b) Hand held power tools in good condition? c) Leads up off the floor? d) Leads not strained? e) Circuit breakers installed?</p>			
<p>4. ChemicalsError! Unknown switch argument. a) Material Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals? b) Containers labelled with contents? c) Employees trained in safe use of chemicals, and first aid actions? d) Personal protective equipment available as required clean and undamaged (e.g., glasses, goggles, dust masks, respirators, gloves, ear muffs, ear plugs, etc.)? e) Is piping labelled? f) Do employees wash before handling food/smoking?</p>			

<p>5. Machinery a) Is machinery guarded if required? b) Error! Unknown switch argument.Is machinery clean? c) Error! Unknown switch argument.Are emergency stop buttons in easy reach? d) Does machinery need repair? Error! Unknown switch argument.</p>			

<p>6. Poison</p> <p>a) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are any poisons in use? (This can be checked using Material Safety Data Sheets)</p> <p>b) Error! Unknown switch argument. If poisons are present, are employees trained in safe use and handling and first aid procedures?</p> <p>c) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are containers labelled correctly?</p>			
<p>7. Spills & Drips</p> <p>a) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are there any chemical spills not cleaned up?</p> <p>b) Error! Unknown switch argument. Is material provided for cleaning up spills?</p> <p>c) Error! Unknown switch argument. Is the floor non-slip?</p> <p>d) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are oil spills or water spills present on the floor?</p> <p>Error! Unknown switch argument.</p>			
<p>8. Trips</p> <p>a) Is the floor cluttered, walkways obstructed, or other trip hazards?</p>			
<p>9. First Aid</p> <p>a) Error! Unknown switch argument. Do employees know who to contact for first aid?</p> <p>b) Is a first aid kit available and clearly labelled?</p> <p>c) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are emergency numbers displayed?</p> <p>d) Are soap and towels available?</p>			
<p>10. Workplace</p> <p>a) Error! Unknown switch argument. Is work height or position awkward or difficult?</p> <p>b) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are sharp edges a hazard?</p> <p>c) Error! Unknown switch argument. Are bins available and emptied regularly?</p> <p>d) Error! Unknown switch argument. Is hearing protection/dust masks worn as appropriate?</p> <p>e) Error! Unknown switch argument. Is the work area clean and tidy?</p> <p>f) Is excessive noise controlled as needed?</p> <p>© Copyright Australian Business Limited 2001</p>			

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

- Refer to **ABL's** OH&S experts by calling **13 26 96** or refer to their website at www.australianbusiness.com.au/ohs
- **ABL** has developed an OHS CD to respond to members' needs for assistance in complying to the September 1 changes in OHS legislation. The new laws require SMEs to implement risk management in the workplace, including assessment, consultation and training. Call **13 26 96** for more information.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The following document is a sample OH&S Policy statement for use by businesses and is taken from the *ABL WorkplaceOHS* site. The site is updated daily with news, research and opinion and is a subscriber-only site.

.....Pty Ltd is committed to providing a safe and health workplace for all employees, visitors and contractors.

The company also recognises the responsibilities and requirements placed upon it by Occupational Health and Safety legislation and codes of practice and will adhere to these principles, and provide:

- Safe systems of work and maintenance of company plant and equipment.
- Information, instruction and supervision for all employees, visitors and contractors relevant to the OHS Systems and procedures of the site.
- Consultation with all employees on OHS issues, including any changes to work practices, procedures or before the introduction of new plant and equipment.
- Ongoing programs to prevent accidents, including coordinating regular workplace inspections in conjunction with employees.

Managers and supervisors are expected to fully implement the company safety programs and are responsible for ensuring a safe work environment is provided for all employees under their direct control. Managers and supervisors are also responsible for and expected to report promptly any OHS concerns or issues they become aware of to senior management, where these cannot be addressed within their level of authority.

Employees are expected to fulfil their obligations with respect to OHS legislation by fully participating in company safety programs, reporting injuries and incidents and following all safety directions, regulations and procedures.

Signed:

.....
Executive officer

.....
Employee representative

Review date.....

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

- About office and factory safety? Go to www.workplaceohs.com.au and sign up for a free 21-day trial or phone **ABL** on **13 26 96** and we'll register you.
- About draft forms like the one above? **The Employers Toolkit CD** has more than 200 draft policies, letters and contracts that employers need to manage staff issues. Call **ABL Member Services** on **13 26 96**.
- Do you have a legal problem with staff that have injured themselves at work, or any other OH&S legal matter? Contact **AB Lawyers** – Ph: **13 26 96** – or visit www.australianbusiness.com.au/ablawyers

DEALING WITH BOMB THREATS

The threat of being bombed is a harsh reality in today's world. We are all becoming more aware of these incidents of violence and the illegal use of explosives. However, would your staff know what to do, or more importantly, what information to capture if they took a call from someone threatening your business with a bomb?

There are specific questions that the NSW Bomb Squad and the Australian Bomb Data Bureau recommend you ask to help them better identify and trace the caller. If there is one point that cannot be overemphasised, it is the value of being prepared.

Below is a small sample of recommended questions you should ask of a caller and the information you should record of someone threatening to let off a bomb in your workplace.

CHECKLIST

- Where has the bomb been placed?
- When is the bomb going to go off?
- What will make the bomb explode?
- Was the caller a man or a woman?
- What is your estimate of the caller's age?
- In relation to the caller's voice - did you detect an accent; a speech impediment?
- Did you recognise the voice?
- Was the message taped or read from a note?
- What sort of background noises could you hear?

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

- The above information is a Business Tip published on www.australianbusiness.com.au
- For more ABL member only information on OH&S issues go to www.australianbusiness.com.au/ohs
- You can also refer to **ABL's** subscriber-based OH&S site, www.workplaceohs.com.au which has daily, updated information for OH&S professionals.
- On OH&S matters, call **ABL** Members Services on **13 26 96**.
- **ABL** has developed an OHS CD to respond to members' needs for assistance in complying to the September 1 changes in OHS legislation. The new laws require SMEs to implement risk management in the workplace, including assessment, consultation and training. Call **13 26 96** for more information.