

Passport to Safety



December 2005 Edition

**Produced by the
Corporate Procurement Unit,
Department of Legal & Democratic Services**

IMPORTANT NOTE

This passport to safety is not a legally binding document. Though we have taken great care in preparing it, the Council will not be held responsible for any legal or other action resulting from the information provided in this passport to safety. It is for guidance only and does not protect you from the law. Remember it is your responsibility to be aware of your obligations in law relating to Health & Safety issues and ensuring safe methods of working are followed.

Introduction

Despite all the safety manuals, rules and systems that a company may have, or however many experts are employed, there is no substitute for the person who thinks and acts safely.

This guide does not necessarily cover all the points that may need to be considered in any task. We believe that **everyone** involved on our sites, employed either directly by us or as a subcontractor, is responsible for health and safety matters.

If you need more explanation than this brief guide gives, ask your site supervisor, head of department, director or safety consultant.

Safety is not an optional extra. It is a function of management and an important part of **your** daily duties. It is **your** responsibility.

There are certain areas that as an employer you should be taking into account when considering Health and Safety issues and determining your policy.

Such areas that you should consider are:

- A safe place of work
- Well maintained equipment and systems of work
- Appropriate and well maintained plant and machinery
- Suitable arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- Arrangements for providing information, instruction, training and supervision to staff
- A safe working environment with adequate welfare facilities including the provision of relevant first aid equipment and the availability of suitably qualified first aiders
- Guidance to staff on emergency procedures, risk assessments and information on Health and Safety
- The effective monitoring and review of safety standards
- A comprehensive training plan should be in place which should be part of the induction for new starters and periodic training should be provided to existing staff as required

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

This is the most important legislation affecting the working conditions of people in this county. Its purpose is to provide the legal framework to promote, encourage and guarantee high standards of health and safety at work.

It sets out a system of offences that you can be fined for. Also, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Environmental Health Officers have the power to issue notices for immediate action to be taken to put things right if they discover that the legal requirements relating to health, safety and welfare have not been met.

Under the Act, members of the public and employees must be protected against risks to health and safety arising out of the activities of people at work. This is very important, particularly where children are concerned, even if they are trespassing.

This may not cover all the rules that apply to your type of work and it is your company's duty to make people aware of all the standards that apply to them.

More detailed information may be provided in any contract that we issue to your organisation.

The Health and Safety Executive publish guidance on Health and Safety legislation. They can be contacted at HSE books on 08701 545500 or by visiting their website at <http://www.hsebooks.co.uk/>

The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS)

It is now a requirement for firms wishing to join the Council's approved list of Contractors and therefore possibly undertaking work for the Council, to be approved by the Contractors Health and Safety (CHAS) Assessment Scheme.

The scheme is a national database of contractors who have demonstrated adequate health and safety compliance and management standards and are therefore approved to work on local authority contracts (subject to approval of other checks such as financial standing and specific health and safety issues relating to the work being undertaken etc.)

The CHAS scheme aims to eliminate the wasteful duplication of effort whereby contractors apply separately to be accepted onto the approved list of numerous public bodies.

Areas that are covered by CHAS include an assessment of your general policy statement, organisation of health & safety and the associated training.

Information on how to apply to become approved can be obtained from CHAS at their website www.chas.gov.uk

Safety policy and codes of practice

We have produced a general health and safety policy. This is supported by the departments who have codes of practice to deal with any dangers that are specific to their areas of responsibility.

Departmental safety policies will include codes of practice that relate to specific dangers in departments or services. Contractors should ask for copies of these departmental codes of practice from the site supervisor of the scheme they are working on before they start work.

As well as this, we ask departments to report on your performance after you have completed a job for us on a contractor performance report. As well as reporting your general performance on site, the report also gives the department's supervising officer the opportunity to comment on your health and safety practices on site. If the supervising officer sends us an unsatisfactory report on your progress, we will suspend you from the approved list until we investigate the matter further.

Should you not comply with accepted Health and Safety procedures then you may not be allowed to do any further work for the Council.

Safety of the workforce

The contractor must make sure that they take account of the safety of the workforce on site and the general public when pricing, organising and making decisions.

It is the contractor's duty to carry out a risk assessment (Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999) for the tasks that they are about to carry out. This may be:

- part of a generic (common) system which can be changed to suit particular local conditions;
- an on-the-job assessment (which we may need to see); or
- a safety plan that the Construction Design and Management (CDM) needs for larger projects.

Management are responsible for making sure that people within their organisation have the skills they need or are being properly trained.

All workers

Everybody has a responsibility for ensuring the safety of themselves, their colleagues and the general public.

If workers have any doubts about safe working practices, they should ask the site supervisors for help.

It is important to remember that without workers' co-operation, site working systems will not work and people may be killed or injured.

Competent people

People who are competent or are being trained by a competent person, should carry out all work activities.

With regard to health and safety matters, the main contractor should consider all labour-only subcontractors working on sites as being direct employees.

All subcontractors must work within the guidelines set out in the main contractor's health and safety policy and their own safety policy.

If subcontractors do not follow safety policies, we may remove main contractors from our sites.

It is important to remember that all subcontractors have their own responsibilities for health and safety.

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994.- (CDM)

CDM applies to all demolition and structural dismantling work ,except where it is undertaken for a domestic client

CDM applies to most construction projects. There are a number of situations where CDM does not apply. These include:

Some small-scale projects which are exempt from some aspects of CDM; construction work for domestic clients, (although there are always duties on the designer, and the contractor should notify HSE where appropriate); construction work carried out inside offices and shops, or similar premises ,that does not interrupt the normal activities in the premises and is not separated from those activities; the maintenance or removal of insulation on pipes ,boilers or other parts of heating or water systems

The purpose of CDM is to ensure that health and safety is co-ordinated and managed throughout all stages of a construction project in order to help reduce accidents, ill-health and costs. Where CDM applies, you will have legal duties to discharge (which are enforceable in a court of law). Your duties are the same whatever the size of project . However ,how much you will actually need to do will vary from project to project.

It is important that you are aware of these regulations if you are carrying out construction work and what legal duties you are required to follow.

Site supervision

Supervisors should organise the site to make sure there are working practices and people follow current legislation, codes of practice, guidance notes etc.

Check that the people working on the site have the skills they need to do their job properly.

Take action on any safety reports

COSHH

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations, an assessment of risk must be made for all substances that are dangerous to health. If you are supplying chemicals, you must make sure that you supply the correct COSHH documents with the chemicals.

Some substances could have long-term effects on your health.

Find out if the substance you are using is dangerous to health and use the necessary control measures or personal protective equipment. Check the product data sheet and your company COSHH information.

Each department has its own policy and contractors should check with the relevant department as to what information is available about dangerous substances in the building or where work is to be carried out.

Dangerous materials (asbestos, lead and so on)

All contractors must be aware that while everything will be done to tell you about dangerous materials in premises, there may be times when these substances, particularly asbestos insulation, are discovered during work. If

this happens, all work in the area must **stop** and the contract supervisor must be told immediately. Arrangements will then be made to remove any asbestos. In the case of other dangerous materials, this will depend on what and where the material is. Suitable contractors will remove these materials.

Using chemicals

There are chemicals in adhesives, mixtures, cleaners for brickwork and stone, decorative protective treatments for timber and metals, floor treatments, form work, mould treatments, fumigants, cements, grouts, insulants, sealants, weedkillers and other solvents.

Never use chemicals without making sure that suitable personal protective equipment is available, worn and maintained in a satisfactory condition as chemicals can be absorbed through the skin.

Regularly check all containers for damage. Some chemicals can become unstable and explosive if they are not handled properly.

If chemicals splash onto your skin or into your eyes, you should wash them off immediately with clean running water. If running water is not available on site, a suitable saline (salty) solution should be available at all times.

Personal safety

Your responsibilities

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|----------|--|
| 1 | Each employee should be their own safety officer. |
| 2 | Always behave responsibly and safely. |
| 3 | Do not expose others to danger through your own actions. |
| 4 | Always use the correct tools and equipment for the job. |
| 5 | Always use safety equipment and personal protective equipment provided for your use. |
| 6 | Report all faults in machinery and equipment. |
| 7 | Tell new members of staff about safe working practices. |

Head protection

In general, the appropriate head protection must be worn whenever there is a risk of someone suffering a head injury.

Many main contractors run sites that are 'hard-hat' areas. This means that helmets must be worn at all times except in certain 'safe' areas.

Safe systems of work should reduce the risk of injury.

Always use safe methods of lifting and handling objects. Get help if you are not sure about anything.

Staff should be trained in Lifting and Handling techniques.

Always lift materials carefully. Use your legs and not your back.

Personal protective equipment

You should use personal protective equipment such as helmets, eye protectors, ear defenders, breathing masks, foul-weather clothing and so on for specific tasks or as detailed in the Risk Assessment

Safety footwear should be worn on site.

Remember, personal injuries can arise from people abusing personal protective equipment.

When you are given protective clothing or equipment (or both) to use:

- report any faulty or loss to your supervisor immediately; and
- ask your supervisor if you have any doubts about having to use or maintain the equipment or clothing correctly.

Work at Height Regulations 2005

These Regulations apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury including falls below ground level.

There is a duty placed upon employers, the self-employed, and any person who controls the work of others (eg facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height) to the extent they control the work. Duty holders must ensure;

- All work at height is properly planned and organised.
- Those involved in work at height are competent.
- The risks from work at height are assessed and appropriate work equipment is selected and used.
- The risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled: and
- equipment for work at height is properly inspected and maintained.

If you are an employee or working under someone else's control you must:-

- Report any safety hazard to them
- Use the equipment supplied (including safety devices) properly following any training and instructions (unless you think that would be unsafe, in which case you should seek further instructions before continuing)
- The regulations do not apply to the provision of paid instruction or leadership in caving or climbing by way of sport, recreation, team building or similar activities.

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005

It is important that the risks from hand held vibrating power tools and also the problems which can be caused by riding in vehicles ,particularly over rough terrain is understood and controlled.

Hand and Arm Vibration and whole body vibration can be the cause of serious disability to workers. Employers have a duty under the regulations to :-

- Reduce exposure to a minimum.
- Provide information and training.
- Assess exposure levels.
- Carry out a programme of measures to reduce exposure and provide appropriate health surveillance when exposure reaches the exposure action level.

You may require some assistance in dealing with vibration at work if so it is suggested that you contact the HSE or your trade organisation.

The Control of Noise at Work regulations 2005

You have a legal duty under the Noise Regulation to reduce the risk of damage to your employees' hearing .It is therefore important that these risks are understood and suitable assessments and procedures are put in place to control such problems.

Hearing damage caused by noise is permanent and incurable- it can range from sounds appearing muffled to total deafness. Permanent 'Tinnitus' or ringing in the ears can be caused as well.

The HSE has produced a new edition of the Guidance L108 " Controlling Noise at Work " , Additionally a new leaflet INDG362 (rev 1) has been produced and a pocket card is available for employees INDG363 (rev 1).

Trades

Bricklayers

You must wear a hard hat if there is a risk of head injury or there is a special hard-hat area.

You must **not** interfere with scaffolding so that it suits **your** needs.

Only a scaffolder can alter scaffolding under the direction of the site supervisor.

Brick stacks should be placed behind standards and not above guardrail height (brick guards) which would lead to overloading.

Remember that you have a duty to protect other people and yourself. If the scaffold is not to the correct standard, or if your working platform is untidy, report the situation to the site supervisor – it could save lives.

Carpenters

Carpenters working on site or in a woodworking shop must follow specific regulations.

Carpenters should be constantly aware of the dangers of woodworking machinery and should make sure that guards are fitted whenever they are needed.

Demolition workers

Demolition is a high-risk activity and must be planned beforehand. This is controlled by CDM regulations.

Only competent, certificated people should be employed to do this type of work. Competent supervision at Level 3 (Topman) or Level 4 (Supervisor) must be provided for all council tasks.

All workers must be certificated or registered on an official training scheme for demolition or as machinery operators.

Make sure that you are not weakening the structure by removing timbers or steelwork.

Cutting equipment must be in good condition and kept on bottle trolleys. Flashback arresters must be fitted.

Identify demolition areas with signs so people are aware of work activities, and put up boards and fences.

All deliberate collapse operations should be planned, controlled and properly supervised.

You should remember that demolition has been greatly criticised in the past for its poor record of accidents, both to its own workers and the general public.

Painters

They should make sure that they follow COSHH regulations at all times.

When working at height, you must use a correct working platform with handrails and toeboards.

You should store flammable paints in a fireproof container marked 'flammable' with a warning sign.

When spraying, make sure that you have the correct personal protective equipment.

Check with your site supervisor or if you are not sure about anything.

When preparing surfaces for painting, you must be careful when you remove the existing paint. Many old buildings still contain lead paint.

Plasterers

Poor temporary access and working platforms are common safety problems for plasterers. If good access and suitable working platforms are not provided, contact your site supervisor immediately. Do not improvise.

Make sure that you follow the COSHH regulations.

Roadworkers

Good access must be provided. Dangers and roadworks should be correctly marked with cones, barriers and signs.

Roadworkers must wear a fluorescent jacket or waistcoat so drivers can see them.

You must follow chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs manual and the requirements for competent supervision at all times.

Roofers

Roofing work is a high-risk activity and should only be carried out by trained workers. The HSE have issued guidance on safe working. Risk assessments must be carried out prior to the work starting

- When working on all roofs, flat or otherwise, make sure that edges are protected or other safety precautions are in force.
- Make sure that extra toeboards or brick guards (or both) are in place if materials will be stacked.
- Make sure that crawl ladders are fit for the job.
- Be aware of fragile roofing materials and roof lights. You must take the necessary measures to prevent material or people falling through.
- When you are using battens as footholds, remember that they may be rotten.
- If you are using a safety harness, make sure you have good anchor points.
- You must use youngman-type boards on fragile roofs.
- Remember the weight load that is placed on scaffolding when you are tiling.
- If you are doing hot work, suitable fire extinguishers must be provided. There must be enough hose between gas cylinders and tar boilers (at least three metres). Tar boiling areas should be fenced off, particularly on School sites.
- Do not just throw materials into skips. If you must use a skip on the road, you need to:
 - get a permit;
 - put it in a safe place; and
 - put appropriate markings on the road.

You must keep timber laths that contain nails in a secure compound to prevent public access.

Scaffolding

Only certificated scaffolders should put up scaffolding.

The site supervisor should check the scaffolding every day, and it should be formally inspected every seven days and recorded in the appropriate manual.

Scaffolding should be put up in line with current legislation, codes of practice and so on. All scaffolding currently needs at least **two** guardrails plus a toeboard so that gaps are not more than 470 millimetres wide.

Supervisors should make sure that there are brick guards fitted wherever there is a risk of falling materials. You should have these as well as basic guardrails.

When guardrails are removed so people can pass materials, you must make sure that they are put back immediately afterwards.

Tools and equipment

- Make sure that all necessary guards are fitted before the equipment is used.
- Never try to use tools and equipment if you do not know how to. People who use some equipment need to have received certificated training.
- Always make sure that push sticks are available when people are using circular sawing machines.
- Always make sure that electrical appliances operate from a 110-volt supply.
- Generators should be in a place where the fumes can be released and where there is suitable ventilation.
- When you have finished using the equipment, do not leave tools or cartridges lying around the site or work area. Return all equipment to the supervisor for security or site safety reasons.
- Always make sure that cartridges are stored in a damp-proof sealed container away from the cartridge tool.
- Do not try to do major repairs yourself. Make sure that equipment is maintained in line with the manufacturer's recommended instructions

Compressors

Generally, the main dangers when working with compressors are:

- hands or clothing being trapped in the pulley drives;
- the air receiver exploding;

- air lines being misused;
- electric shocks;
- slipping due to oil leaks; and
- hearing and eye damage.

Supervisors should make sure that:

- equipment is inspected every day or week by competent people and a record is made;
- all maintenance checks have been completed to make sure that vibration and noise is reduced as much as possible; and

You should:

- not start work until all hoses and pipes are checked for leaks;
- always keep hoses as short as possible (traffic should not be allowed to run over hoses);
- not bend or restrict hoses while they are under pressure;
- never direct the airflow at themselves or other people;
- never use an open-air line for blowing out shutters and so on (a restrictor or lance must be fitted);
- never try to change tools with the air flowing through the hoses;
- be aware that if there is an air-line fracture, you can turn off the air supply and control by crimping the air line a safe distance from the break point; and
- always wear goggles, ear defenders and protective footwear when using this equipment.

Ladder safety

Always check ladders for splits, damaged or missing rungs.

Never work on ladders that are on uneven ground, unless levelling devices are being used.

Make sure that ladders are properly secured, preferably at the top, and extend at least 1.07 metres (3 foot 6 inches) above the

stepping-off point or working level where appropriate handrails are not available.

Always make sure that the ladder is long enough for the work and leave at least 1.1 metres (3 foot 6 inches) above the rung you are standing on.

Never use the rung of a ladder as a support system or for run-up boards.

Always make sure that there are at least three rungs at the overlap point when using extension ladders.

Always make sure that you maintain safe access and that the ladder is positioned free from the risk of falling materials.

When working and handling ladders, make sure that there are no overhead power lines nearby.

Always set the ladder at the correct angle – one metre out for every four metres high.

Lifting appliances

No-one should be allowed to operate lifting appliances or act as banksman unless they have been trained to work with lifting appliances.

Supervisors should always make sure that any lifting appliance that is used on site has been thoroughly tested, examined and inspected before it is used.

Supervisors should always check that current test certificates are available and registers are maintained.

Make sure that no lifting appliance or gear is used unless the safe working load is clearly displayed.

You should:

- not use faulty lifting appliances or lifting gear – tell your supervisor immediately;
- make sure that the lifting appliance is in a safe position and is on firm, level ground;
- not deliberately 'swing' loads to try to increase the radius of the load pick-up or deposit points;
- keep clear of the tail swing of mobile or crawler cranes as you could be stuck or crushed between obstructions;

Scaffold and work platforms

Management should always make sure that competent people put up scaffolding structures.

You should:

- not remove or interfere with scaffolding in any way (only a competent scaffolder should only carry out alterations);
- never use a scaffold which is being put up or taken apart (**do not use it if it is not complete**);
- always make sure when positioning materials on working platforms that stacks are next to the standards, not between them;

Management should:

- always make sure warning notices are displayed;
- always make sure that there is enough material for the job on site and that it has been inspected (never use faulty materials);
- make sure that timber sole plates and metal base plates are used and that they are the correct size to provide a safe foundation for the scaffold;
- make sure that all couplings between tubes are staggered vertically and horizontally and tied back to the building at regular intervals (always make sure that the correct couplers are used for all connections);
- always make sure that scaffold standards are upright and are set out in line with regulations and codes of practice; and

- always make sure that internal and façade bracing is fitted. Fans should be provided where pedestrians need to pass under the work area.

Towers

- Towers should only be put up by people who are trained to do so and in line with the manufacturer's guidelines. They are not designed for heavy work and must not be overloaded.
- Towers should not be moved with staff or equipment on top
- Stabilisers should be used to provide extra safety.
- When using tower scaffolds outside, they should never be more than three times higher than the base dimension.

Vehicle safety

Supervisors should make sure that workers:

- never try to drive or operate any vehicle or machine unless they have a current licence and have received suitable training;
- never allow any person who is under 18 to operate any machinery or vehicles;
- never reverse their vehicle without a banksman or using a warning device;
- Management should also organise a site traffic movement system

Drivers and machinery operators

All drivers should have the correct licence and certificate. The building industry has a system of certification for people who use machinery. You should have one if you drive site machinery.

Using rough-terrain fork-lift trucks and telescopic handlers

- No-one under 18 is allowed to drive machines.
- Supervisors should make sure that:
- no-one is allowed to operate machines unless they have been trained to do so.
- operators have a certificate of training (CTA).

You should:

- report any faults or accidents to your immediate supervisor and not use the machine until things have been put right;
- Always load with the mast vertical or tilted back slightly.
- Always maintain stability when you are loading by making sure that forks are adjusted to the widest spacing possible.

- Always travel with the load in the lowest possible position. Do not raise the load while you are travelling.
- When the fork-lift is not loaded, the forks should face downhill with the tilt adjusted to suit the incline and be raised enough to clear the ground.

Accidents and emergencies

First aid and reporting accidents

Make sure you know what arrangements are in place for dealing with first aid. These may be from the client or your employer, or special arrangements for first-aid kits that are carried personally or in a vehicle.

You should report all accidents to your employer.

Your quick action could save a life or prevent serious injuries.

You should make sure that:

- the scene is left undisturbed until a supervisor or safety officer has checked it; and
- no items are removed that could help the accident investigation.

Life-saving action

If you are not likely to cause any more damage (special care needs to be taken where back and neck injuries are suspected), you should put the patient into the recovery position until help arrives.

When in doubt, **do not move** a casualty unnecessarily. Only move them to avoid further injury, if there are breathing difficulties or if their position leaves them at risk from further dangers

Emergency procedures if there is a fire

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for providing and maintaining suitable arrangements and necessary training for employees.

Contractors should contact the site supervisor before they start work to find out the procedures that apply to the building or area in which they are working, especially if their work may affect current systems.

Fire precautions

Supervisors should make sure that fire-fighting extinguishers are available, especially where hot work is being carried out, and are displayed in a prominent position.

Make sure that highly flammable liquids, or liquefied petroleum gas, are not stored in buildings where heaters are present.

Workers should:

- make sure that fire-fighting equipment is nearby before they start work that involves burning equipment, blowlamps and so on.
- always point the jet at the base of the flames when putting out a fire.

Welfare facilities

- Sufficient and Suitable welfare facilities should be provided
- Water or biocidal agent for hand washing
- Arrangements for toilet facilities

Depending upon the length of the project there may also be a need to provide areas to eat and store clothing.

Useful contacts

For more information on becoming an approved contractor for us, please contact:

Corporate Procurement Unit

Department of Legal & Democratic Services
Leeds City Council
4th Floor West
Civic Hall
Leeds
LS1 1UR.

Phone: 0113 247 4007

Fax: 0113 247 4677

E-mail: lynda.hayes@leeds.gov.uk

Websites: www.leeds.gov.uk

For general health and safety information, please contact:

Health and Safety Executive

Marshalls Mill
Marshall Street
Leeds
LS11 9YJ