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Securing Your World

2011, Issue 4

HSE Quiz Question

What part of the CPR process circulates blood containing oxygen to the vital organs?

SUBMIT YOUR ANSWER TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPT. EITHER VIA EMAIL OR BY CALLING 646-2307. FIRST CORRECT RESPONSE WINS A PRIZE

S/O Rafaelito Alvarado of CNMI was August's Quiz Question Winner

How to assess the risks in your workplace

Follow the five steps

1. Identify the hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on what precaution to take
4. Record your findings and implement a plan to minimize or fix the threat
5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

When thinking about your risk assessment, remember:

a **hazard** is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer, etc; and the **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting your workers and your business, as well as complying with the law. It helps you focus on the risks that really matter in your workplace – the ones with the potential to cause real harm. In many instances, straightforward measures can readily control risks, for example ensuring spillages are cleaned up promptly so people do not slip, or cupboard drawers are kept closed to ensure people do not trip.

For most, that means simple, cheap and effective measures to ensure your most valuable asset - your workforce - is protected.

The law does not expect you to eliminate all risk, but you are required to protect people as far as reasonably practicable
Don't overcomplicate the process.

In many organizations, the risks are well known and the necessary control measures are easy to apply.

You probably already know, for example, you have employees who move heavy items or loads and could harm their backs, or where people are most likely to slip or trip, if you check that you have taken reasonable precautions to avoid injury.

In all cases, you should make sure that you involve your staff or their representatives in the process. They will have useful information about how the work is done that will make your assessment of the risk more thorough and effective. But remember, you are responsible for seeing that the assessment is carried out properly.

Frequently asked questions

What if the post or areas I work in tend to vary a lot?

Identify the hazards you can reasonably expect and assess the risks from them. This general assessment should stand you in good stead for the majority of your work. Where you do take on work or a new post that is different, cover any new or different hazards with a specific assessment. You do not have to start from scratch each time.

What if one of my employee's circumstances change?

You'll need to look again at the risk assessment. For example: You are required to carry out a specific risk assessment for new or expectant mothers, as some tasks (heavy lifting or work with chemicals) may not be appropriate. If an employee develops a disability then you are required to make reason-

able adjustments. People returning to work following major surgery may also have particular requirements. If you put your mind to it, you can almost always find a way forward that works for you and your employees.

Do my employees have responsibilities?

Yes. Employees have legal responsibilities to co-operate with their employer's efforts to improve health and safety (they must wear protective equipment when it is provided), and to look out for each other.



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Lifting Safely

In most work situations, objects that are very heavy are lifted and carried by machines such as forklifts. However, there are times when you may have to lift, adjust, or carry a heavy object. It is at these times that you run the risk of injuring your back.

Before lifting and carrying a heavy object, take a few moments to assess the situation.

- How far will you have to carry the load?
- Is the way clear of clutter, cords, slippery areas, overhangs, stairs, curbs, or uneven surfaces?
- Will there be doors that are closed? Ask someone to hold a door open or place a wedge under the door to hold it open.
- Once you get the load up, will you be able to see over it, or will it block your view?
- Can the load be disassembled, carried in pieces, then reassembled?

Last Month's Quiz Question and Answer: A person is unconscious, put the following steps in order:

- A) Tap the person and shout
- B) Open airway
- C) Check for signs of life (movement & normal breathing)
- D) Check the scene for safety

ANSWER: 4, 1, 2, 3

Before You Lift

Take a few moments to "size up the load." Test the weight by lifting a corner of the object. If it is too heavy or if the object is an odd shape, STOP! Ask for help. Two or three people lifting a heavy object is much safer than trying to do it yourself.

- Use a hand truck, pushcart, or a mechanical lifting device.
- Consider using gloves that will improve your grip and protect your hands.

Never lift anything unless you are sure you can do so safely.

Alternatives to Lifting

Hand trucks and Pushcarts

When using a hand truck or pushcart, remember:

It is easier and safer to push than to pull.

Stay close to the load, try not to lean over, and keep your back straight or slightly arched.

Use both hands to control the hand truck or pushcart.

Use tie-down straps, if necessary, to secure the load.

Avoid stairs and inclines. If you must take a load to another floor, use a freight elevator.

Never "horse around" with hand trucks and pushcarts

