



WORKSAFE VICTORIA

# A HEALTH AND SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Aug 2013

As a small business operator, you need to be aware of your health and safety responsibilities, and identify risks and control hazards at your workplace. Use this checklist to help you understand what to look for in order to make your workplace safe. If you answer 'no' to any of the questions, you should take action to learn more and fix the hazard you have identified. In doing this, talk to employees involved in the identified areas/activities. By consulting your employees they take ownership and more readily implement the changes required.

Keep in mind that hazardous manual handling is the biggest cause of workplace injury in Victoria so consider what activities may lead to this type of injury.

You may need to do more than one assessment. Regularly review and update your assessment to ensure you maintain a safe workplace.

**Note:** Not all sections in this checklist may apply to your business – if this is the case, leave the section blank. If you can only partly answer yes, then you should tick no.

Date of assessment

 /  / 

Assessment completed by

Work area management representative

Work area health and safety representative (HSR)

Others (employees, consultants)

|   | Yes | No | Comment |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| <b>Managing safety</b>  |     |    |         |
| Is there a process for consulting employees about health and safety issues (eg. changes to the work area or equipment, purchasing of new equipment)?  |     |    |         |
| Do employees know how to report health and safety issues?   |     |    |         |
| Do you consider safety when buying or leasing equipment or machinery?   |     |    |         |
| Do you ask for maintenance records and replacement schedules when purchasing second-hand equipment or machinery?                                      |     |    |         |
| Do you regularly check to ensure all guards are in place?   |     |    |         |
| When buying hazardous substances, do you check Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) / Safety Data Sheets (SDS) to ensure they are current?              |     |    |         |
| Are safety instructions on the MSDS / SDS (eg. safety instructions for use, personal protective equipment, storage, clean-up and first aid) followed? |     |    |         |
| Do you ensure and check that hazardous substances containers are correctly labelled?  |     |    |         |

|   | Yes | No | Comment |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| <b>Managing safety (cont.)</b>  |     |    |         |
| Do you check the noise levels of equipment and machinery (purchased or hired) to ensure they are less than 85db(A)?   |     |    |         |
| Are employees trained in the safe use of any new equipment, machinery or chemicals?   |     |    |         |
| Do you provide health and safety information (site induction, emergency and first aid procedures) for all employees and contractors?  |     |    |         |
| Are there clear instructions (written where possible) so tasks can be done safely?  |     |    |         |
| Do you ensure work is not given to employees who don't have the right skills or certificates?   |     |    |         |
| Do you regularly check to ensure employees are working safely, even if they are off-site or travelling?   |     |    |         |
| Are new and inexperienced employees adequately supervised?  |     |    |         |
| Do team leaders and supervisors know how to keep workers safe (eg. work planning, reducing risks)?  |     |    |         |
| Do you ensure employees who need health checks (eg. hearing, blood tests, breathing tests), receive them?   |     |    |         |
| If relevant and agreed to by the employee, are immunisations (eg. Q fever, hepatitis A and B, tetanus or tuberculosis) administered?  |     |    |         |
| <b>Environment</b>  |     |    |         |
| Is the workplace clean and tidy (eg. is there a routine for cleaning, rubbish bin emptying)?  |     |    |         |
| Is there ample storage for equipment, tools, samples, stock, ingredients and product?   |     |    |         |
| Are all pipes labelled, have enough support and have no leaks, drips or corrosion?  |     |    |         |
| Are work areas safe from protruding sharp edges or objects?   |     |    |         |
| Is there enough light for people to do each task safely and without eye strain or glare?  |     |    |         |
| Is there adequate air and ventilation to ensure good air quality? Contaminants may include dust, fumes, chemicals, solvents, steam, vehicle and fork lift exhaust, and asbestos fibres. |     |    |         |
| Is the workplace at a comfortable working temperature?  |     |    |         |
| Are adequate amenities (toilets, dining area) provided?   |     |    |         |
| Are walkways and stairs kept clear and safe (eg. steps and handrails secure and anti-slip treads)?  |     |    |         |
| Does the workplace pose a risk of injury due to slips, trips and falls (eg. oil, grease, water, leads and cables)?  |     |    |         |

|  | Yes | No | Comment |
|--|-----|----|---------|
| <b>Environment (cont.)</b>   |     |    |         |
| Is it safe for employees when entering and leaving the building or worksite?   |     |    |         |
| Can people move safely around traffic areas (eg. walkways clearly marked, vehicles separate from walkways, clear vision at corners)?                                       |     |    |         |
| Are vehicle drivers trained and licensed, aware of dangers and have secure loads?  |     |    |         |
| <b>Equipment, machinery and tools</b>  |     |    |         |
| Is the correct equipment used for the job?   |     |    |         |
| Have operators of tools, equipment and machinery been trained in their use?  |     |    |         |
| Are stop/start switches clearly marked and in easy reach of an operator?   |     |    |         |
| Do you safely store waste, particularly if near machinery and equipment?   |     |    |         |
| Is there adequate work space around machinery?   |     |    |         |
| Are tools, equipment and machinery regularly maintained (in accordance with manufacturer's instructions)?  |     |    |         |
| Is there a process to ensure all tools, equipment and machinery is turned off prior to maintenance and cleaning?   |     |    |         |
| Does this process ensure tools, equipment and machinery cannot be turned on by others during maintenance and cleaning processes?   |     |    |         |
| Are unsafe or faulty tools, equipment or machinery reported immediately and withdrawn from use?  |     |    |         |
| <b>Job safety</b>  |     |    |         |
| Are hazards discussed with employees for each task, including hazardous manual handling tasks?   |     |    |         |
| Are there instructions or procedures (eg. safe work method statement) for all work with risks?   |     |    |         |
| Do you ensure people who enter your workplace are not exposed to risk (eg. general public, customers, clients and patients, delivery people, visitors, service personnel)? |     |    |         |
| Are employees protected from abusive or dangerous behaviour (eg. customer service standards and training, security)?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Hazardous manual handling</b>   |     |    |         |
| Has training and information been given to employees on how to recognise hazardous manual handling?  |     |    |         |
| Have all tasks involving hazardous manual handling been identified?  |     |    |         |
| Have you identified solutions by considering improvements in the work area, the system of work, the object/s being handled and the equipment to do the task?               |     |    |         |

|   | Yes | No | Comment |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| <b>Hazardous manual handling (cont.)</b>  |     |    |         |
| Have you considered if mechanical aids could control the risk?  |     |    |         |
| When you introduce a new solution, do you ensure it does not create another risk?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Electricity</b>  |     |    |         |
| Do you have any faulty/damaged electrical plugs, sockets or switches or electrical leads?   |     |    |         |
| Are electrical leads and power boards checked and tagged as safe?   |     |    |         |
| Are the location of powerlines and cables checked before digging, drilling, using cranes or other similar work?   |     |    |         |
| Are non-conductive portable ladders used near electrical equipment or powerlines?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Chemicals</b>  |     |    |         |
| Is there an up-to-date list of all hazardous substances stored and used (eg. cleaning products, paints, solvents, degreasers, petrol, inks, toner, oils, plastics, acids, alkalis, pesticides)? |     |    |         |
| Do you have information about these hazardous substances (eg. a material safety data sheet)?  |     |    |         |
| Are MSDS / SDS readily available to employees?  |     |    |         |
| Are all hazardous substances, medications and containers clearly labelled?  |     |    |         |
| Have all employees received training and instruction on the safe use, handling, transport and storage of all hazardous substances?  |     |    |         |
| Is there good airflow and removal of fumes from areas where chemicals are used (eg. exhaust canopy used)?   |     |    |         |
| Are hazardous substances stored in accordance with the MSDS / SDS?  |     |    |         |
| Are gas cylinders kept upright, away from heat and ignition sources, and only transported in vehicle cabins with a vented compartment?  |     |    |         |
| Are empty gas cylinders stored upright in an area clearly marked 'empty cylinders'?   |     |    |         |
| Are hazardous substances disposed in accordance with the MSDS / SDS?  |     |    |         |
| Do you ensure there is no risk of infection from animals, humans (blood and body fluid), waste or rubbish?  |     |    |         |
| Do booths used for inside spraying areas meet AS 4114:1?  |     |    |         |
| Is spraying work only done by trained people?   |     |    |         |
| Are warning signs displayed near outdoor spraying work?   |     |    |         |

|  | Yes | No | Comment |
|--|-----|----|---------|
| <b>Chemicals (cont.)</b>   |     |    |         |
| Is the correct PPE used for spraying (eg. gloves, footwear, coveralls, respirators and masks)?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Welding and cutting</b>   |     |    |         |
| Are welding and cutting tasks only done by trained people?   |     |    |         |
| Is the risk of fire and explosion controlled?  |     |    |         |
| Are welding and cutting equipment, cables, and compressed gas cylinders checked for defects, rust and leakage?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Confined spaces</b>   |     |    |         |
| Have all confined spaces been identified? Note: A confined space is a limited or restricted means of entry and exit, and may contain harmful atmospheres or stored substances that pose a risk to employees working in them.   |     |    |         |
| Are there permits for entering or working in a confined space (eg. no corrosive or dangerous substances, supply lines cut-off, moving parts locked out, natural or mechanical ventilation, air quality checked, enough lighting, standby person, emergency and rescue procedures and equipment)?                             |     |    |         |
| Are only trained people with a confined space entry permit enter a confined space?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Work at heights</b>   |     |    |         |
| Have all tasks to be done at height been identified (eg. access to areas for repair, maintenance, cleaning or inspection, operation and maintenance of equipment)?   |     |    |         |
| Has fall prevention been put in place (eg. guardrails, scaffolds or other temporary work platforms, harness systems)?  |     |    |         |
| Are stock, materials and displays stored or stacked at an easily reachable height or are ladders or steps required?  |     |    |         |
| Do you ensure unstable or inappropriate objects/ladders/steps are not used? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a chair used as ladder</li> <li>• a straight ladder used on smooth surfaces</li> <li>• a straight ladder used to get stock from racking.</li> </ul>  |     |    |         |
| Are ladders or steps used incorrectly? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reaching too far to either side</li> <li>• standing on the top rung of a ladder</li> <li>• used on uneven floor surfaces</li> <li>• rung ladder used without being secured, or at too shallow or too steep an angle.</li> </ul> |     |    |         |
| <b>Emergency procedures and first aid</b>  |     |    |         |
| Are there procedures to cover emergencies such as fire, explosion, chemical spill, flood, medical emergency, machinery accidents, motor vehicle accidents and robbery?   |     |    |         |
| Have those in charge of emergency situations (such as floor wardens, fire wardens and first aid officers) been trained?  |     |    |         |
| Are exit and assembly points accessible?   |     |    |         |
| Are evacuation plans on display in a prominent area?   |     |    |         |

|  | Yes | No | Comment |
|--|-----|----|---------|
| <b>Emergency procedures and first aid (cont.)</b>  |     |    |         |
| Do exit doors open easily from inside, including cold storeroom doors?   |     |    |         |
| Do you hold regular emergency drills?  |     |    |         |
| Is all emergency equipment in place and working (eg. smoke or heat detectors, sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, duress and other alarms, emergency lighting)?   |     |    |         |
| Do you understand the requirement to notify WorkSafe immediately after becoming aware of a serious injury or incident?   |     |    |         |
| Are first aid officers appropriately trained (eg. hold a Level 2 certificate)?   |     |    |         |
| Are these qualifications maintained?   |     |    |         |
| Do your employees know who and where your first aid officers are?  |     |    |         |
| Do you keep records of first aid provided?   |     |    |         |
| <b>Incident reporting</b>  |     |    |         |
| Do you keep a register of injuries that includes name of injured worker, age, address, time and date of occurrence of injury, cause of injury?                       |     |    |         |
| Do you review the causes of the injury and put steps in place to prevent them from occurring again?  |     |    |         |
| <b>Return to work</b>  |     |    |         |
| Do you know when to appoint a return to work (RTW) coordinator?  |     |    |         |
| Is there a RTW plan for all workers receiving compensation (if off work for more than 20 days)?  |     |    |         |
| Are claims for workers' compensation lodged with your agent within 10 days of receiving them?  |     |    |         |
| <b>Note:</b> If you own or manage a small business and have an injured worker who makes a WorkSafe claim, you may be able to get help in the return to work process. |     |    |         |