

# Compliance Monitoring in Council Buildings



An *FPS* Report

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## Background

Councils have a duty to ensure that buildings under their control comply with appropriate statutory, regulatory and corporate standards. This task has become increasingly complex, onerous and difficult in the context of various potentially competing drivers including:-

- An increasing burden of legislative and regulatory duties falling on building occupiers.
- Delegation of relevant budgets and responsibilities to individual establishments, notably schools but with ultimate accountability still seen as resting with the corporate body of the Council.
- The consequences of increased delegation which has brought about a significant reduction in resources retained centrally to develop and monitor compliance with relevant standards.
- Loss of critical mass and control in delivery of property related services through outsourcing, budget reductions and fragmentation of resources.
- Governance arrangements in establishments are becoming increasingly more complex through the move to Shared Services and Partnering arrangements that do not fit easily with traditional landlord and tenant definitions.

Councils now regularly face challenges in terms of their ability to control and manage what goes on in buildings which they own and which are used by staff or clients for which they have legal responsibility. An example of this is individual schools where there is both the freedom and the financial resources to enable them to procure very significant building projects without calling on the assistance of the Local Education Authority.

In addition to this Councils are faced with a wide range of Health and Safety responsibilities that fall on building occupiers. Even where rigid policies and procedures are set out at corporate level, responsibilities for their implementation are frequently delegated to service managers in individual properties who do not always appreciate the importance of ensuring that regular checks and control measures are carried out and recorded.

We are faced with the situation where day to day responsibility and the majority of available resources are delegated to premises level but with the ultimate accountability remaining at corporate level within the Council. The corporate property officer can ensure that all relevant policies and procedures are in place but is faced with the situation of simply not knowing the level of compliance across the portfolio for which he/she has responsibility. The discovery of non-compliance is often only made as a result of an incident on a particular site, by which time it is too late to do anything about it. In addition to the direct consequences of any incident, the Council could be faced with damage to its reputation, financial loss, individual officers could be faced with legal proceedings and in the worst case, lives of building users could be lost.

This document highlights the key areas where some sort of compliance monitoring is required, along with some background information. It establishes the status of each area (e.g. statutory, recommended good practice), suggests good practice frequencies and provides links to further information.

This document is not a legal document and should be read as a guidance note for those responsible for the management of local authority buildings. The aim of the document is to provide a summary of relevant responsibilities and to assist premises managers to organise appropriate testing and inspection of systems and equipment within their premises.

A great deal of the content of this document can be related to all building types however, there may be specific items, that require monitoring in particular building types for example industrial units, depots, workshops and schools that are not covered in this guide.

This document cannot replace professional advice and premises managers are strongly advised to obtain such advice.

Please note that this document only covers English Law

## Introduction

The basis of British health and safety law is the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA), this Act sets out the broad principles for managing health and safety legislation in most workplaces. The act which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1975 still remains the main health and safety legislation in existence today.

The Act places a general duty on employers to "ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees"<sup>1</sup>. Section 3 of the Act, **General Duty to Others** requires employers to conduct their undertaking in a way that does not pose risk to the health and safety of non-employees. This section is designed to give protection to the general public and other non-employees such as children at school and contractors. A Local Authority's activities are ones to which s3 of the HSWA is likely to be particularly relevant as the majority of premises occupied by local authorities are open to the general public. Section 3 of the HSWA imposes a clear duty on local authorities to conduct their undertakings in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable the safety of the public using the premises.

## Duties on Managers and Directors

Where an offence is committed under the act by a body corporate with the "consent, connivance or neglect" of any director, manager, secretary or similar officer, that person may be prosecuted as well as the body corporate. This means that senior personnel such as managers, directors and indeed the corporate property officer within an authority have special responsibilities to ensure that health and safety is properly managed within their organisation and in areas under their remit. Enforcement inspectors tend to look closely at the role of directors and managers when carrying out inspections.

It is worth therefore, considering in a little more detail what is meant by the words "consent", "connivance" and "neglect"<sup>1</sup>:

Consent – the director/manager is aware that an offence is being committed but agrees to it.

Connivance – the director/manager is equally aware of what is going on and, while not directly encouraging the offence allows it to carry on (effectively turns a blind eye)

Neglect – the director/manager is under a duty to do something but fails to do so.

This document provides a brief explanation of the **main** areas of compliance monitoring that a premises manager would be expected to be aware of and implement. However, Health and Safety Law is becoming less and less prescriptive and does not normally provide specific details with regard to inspection and testing frequencies and regimes. It now focuses more on risk based assessments which can be very much dependant upon individual circumstances such as; the use the building is put to, the users groups, the construction, age and condition of the building, previous maintenance regimes, and the building location. It is therefore often left to the responsible person to decide, once a risk assessment has been carried out what the control measures should be. Therefore this

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<sup>1</sup> Source:<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>

document merely provides an outline of the law covering this area and for further detail and specific information for individual circumstances it will be necessary to refer to the relevant legislation, approved Codes of Practice and/or British Standards.

## **Risk Assessment**

Where a risk assessment is required it should be “a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks”. A suitable and sufficient assessment of risks would:

- correctly identify any significant risk that is reasonable foreseeable
- enables the assessor to decide what action needs to be taken and what the priorities should be
- is appropriate for the type of activity
- will remain valid for a reasonable time
- reflects what employers may reasonably practicably be expected to know about the risks associated with their undertaking.

Risk assessments can be time consuming however, the time and effort put into an assessment should be broadly proportional to the degree of risk. It is difficult however to provide precise guidelines as to what would be considered to be “a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks” as this has not yet been tested in a court of law and therefore the aforementioned suggested areas can merely be used as guidance.

A risk assessment must be reviewed and updated where necessary, for example if there are developments that could possibly suggest that the risk assessment is no longer valid, or where the original circumstances have changed to a significant extent, or a new or changed use of the premises is introduced, this need not necessarily be a changed use for the entire premises. An example where a part change of use of a premises may trigger the need for a risk assessment to be reviewed and updated could be where a school introduces a childcare facility or out of hours club. It is regarded as good practice to carry out a regular review of any risk assessment regardless of whether any changes have occurred. The Health and Safety Executive have produced a useful guide “[Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)”<sup>2</sup>

## **Duty Holder**

Throughout this document the term duty holder is used and it is worthwhile defining exactly what is meant by this term. Often the duty holder is the person or organisation that has clear responsibility for the maintenance or repair of the premises (non-domestic) through an explicit agreement such as a lease or contract.

The actual extent of the duty will depend on the specific details of the agreement. However where there is no agreement or contract or where one exists but it is silent on such matters, the duty is placed on whoever has control of the premises, or part of the premises. If the premises are empty then the duty falls on whoever has control of them. The duty to manage covers all non-domestic premises, including industrial, commercial, or public buildings such as offices, shops and schools.

In local authorities it can often be unclear as to who the ‘duty holder’ is and in order to avoid such confusion there should be a named ‘duty holder post’ at each establishment.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Information/Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Air Conditioning Systems</a>	Inspection	Best Practice Statutory	Annual or bi-annual  Not exceeding five years	<a href="#">The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 No. 991</a>	Under The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007
<a href="#">Asbestos register</a>		Statutory	When circumstances dictate e.g. if changes to the premises have been made	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/schools.pdf">http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/schools.pdf</a>	Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006
<a href="#">Car Parking and Vehicle/pedestrian Segregation</a>	Risk Assessment				The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (regulation 17)
<a href="#">Contractor Qualification Check</a>	Checks made on contractors qualifications i.e. CORGI, NICEIC, ECA	Statutory or Good Practice	On appointment of contractor	See also sections on Gas Safety Regulations and Electricity at Work Regulations	Where contractors are appointed directly by the premises manager then checks should be made to ensure that they have the appropriate qualifications to carry out the specified work. This is covered by various pieces of legislation, such as Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, Gas Safety Regulations 1998 etc

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Risk Assessment</a>	Check on storage and use of hazardous materials	Statutory	Annual (Best Practice)	<a href="#">COSHH A Brief Guide to the Regulations</a> <a href="#">COSHH Approved Code of Practice</a> (NB this is a priced publication)	The Control of Substance Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)
<a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act</a>	Inspection	Statutory	Checks to be made whenever alteration/changes are made to the building or the external environment	<a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1995</a> <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 2005</a> <a href="#">BS8300</a>	Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 and BS8300
<a href="#">Duct Hygiene (Air Conditioning, Plenum Heating)</a>	Inspection and testing		Annual inspection and testing – thorough cleaning routine determined from testing/inspection results		Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations) 1992 and COSHH LEV Testing
<a href="#">Electrical - PAT</a>	Portable appliance testing	Statutory	Variable but can be up to annual	<a href="#">The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998</a>	The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Electrical - Fixed Electrical Installations</a>	Schematic of supply route and primary distribution	Best Practice	Annual Update	<a href="#">Simple precautions - Work on electrical equipment machinery or installations</a>	Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and BS 7671 IEE Wiring Regulations
	Inspection of fixed wiring and all distribution boards and safety devices	Highly recommended	Annual	<a href="#">The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989</a> <a href="#">Electrical Safety Council's Best Practice Guide on Periodic Inspection Reporting</a>	Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and BS 7671 IEE Wiring Regulations
	Testing of all fixed wiring and all distribution boards	Statutory	5 yearly (or more frequently as determined by competent person)		Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and BS 7671 IEE Wiring Regulations
	Testing of all distribution boards in mobile accommodation	Statutory	Annual		Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and BS 7671 IEE Wiring Regulations
Electrical Stage Lighting	Inspection and testing		Annually inspection and test by competent person		

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
Electrical Stage Lighting	Inspection and testing of portable dimmer racks with no fixed cabling, plugs, sockets, flexible leads		Every 3 months and after every alteration		
<a href="#">Emergency Lighting</a>	Inspection and testing of system	Statutory	Variable but recommend monthly checks by premises manager to check functionality, RCD (Residual Current Device [Circuit Breaker]) test. To include stop button functional test. Every six months - 1 hour duration test Annual full duration test		Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Extraction Systems</a> including Fume Cupboards	Inspection and Testing of Dust Extraction Equipment	Best Practice	Annual		Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 (as amended)
	Local Exhaust Ventilation	Statutory	Every 14 months	<a href="#">Controlling Airborne Contaminants at Work: A Guide to Local Exhaust Ventilation</a> NB this is a priced publication	Control of Substance Hazardous to Health 2002 (as amended)  Building Bulletin 88 Fume Cupboards, DfES applies to installation and maintenance of school fume cupboards  There is a British Standard that applies to other fume cupboards
<a href="#">Fire Risk Assessment</a> and Management Plan	Fire Risk Assessment	Statutory	Whenever any changes are made that will impact on the original assessment	<a href="#">The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005</a>	Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
<a href="#">Fire Detection and Alarm Systems</a>	Inspection and testing of system	Best Practice	Weekly test with formal quarterly and annual inspections by competent person		Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
<a href="#">Fire Doors</a>	Inspection		Weekly		Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Fire Fighting Equipment</a>	Inspection and maintenance extinguishers	Best practice	Annual		Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
	Inspection and testing of fire sprinkler system	Best practice	Annual, although further checks may be necessary for specific insurance requirements.		Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
<a href="#">First Aid Equipment</a>	Inspection		Regular checks to ensure no equipment is outside of expiry date	<a href="#">HSE - First aid at work: Legislation</a>	Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
<a href="#">Fuel Oil Storage</a>	Plan of primary pipe work and main isolation points	Best Practice	Annual Update	<a href="#">The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001</a>	The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001
	Visual Condition Inspection	Recommended	Annual		The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001
	Maintenance checks on all pipe work devices	Best Practice	Annual		The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Gas Safety</a>					The Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
<a href="#">Gas Appliance</a>	Gas Safety Inspections and certificates	Statutory		<a href="#">THE GAS SAFETY (INSTALLATION AND USE) REGULATIONS 1998</a>	The Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
	Identification and location	Statutory	Annual updating		The Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
	Servicing for efficient operation, combustion	Recommended for all premises Statutory duty on Landlords	Annual Servicing to include check on ventilation, adequate flues, heat input combustion conformance, appliance is stable and safety devices working		The Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
	Visual condition inspection and testing if required	Recommended	Annual		The Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
<a href="#">Gas Pipe Work</a>					
<a href="#">Glazing</a>	Checks	Statutory	Initial survey of building to identify areas where safety glazing should be in place, ongoing checks that any glazing replacements are with safety glass as req'd.		Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992) and Building Regulation Part M

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Hydrotherapy Pools and Swimming Pools</a>	Risk Assessment			The Health and Safety Executive publication HSG179 <a href="#">Managing health and safety in swimming pools</a> (HSG179)	Health and Safety Act Work Act 1974
<a href="#">Lifts and Hoists</a>	Thorough examination, full maintenance and Inspection	Statutory	Every 6 months minimum for passenger lifts Every 12 months for goods lifts After substantial and significant changes have been made	<a href="#">The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998</a>	Lift Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 <a href="#">Thorough examination and testing of lifts</a>
Lighting Conductors	Inspection and testing	Best Practice	Every 11 months full test to assess adequacy of earthing, evidence of corrosion, alterations to structure (by competent persons to BS 7430)		BS 6551, 1992
<a href="#">Mobiles – Stability of</a>	Structural inspection of mobile accommodation	Best Practice	Annual		

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
<a href="#">Playground &amp; Gymnasium equipment - Fixed</a>	Inspection and testing	Best Practice	Annual		BS 5696, BS 7188, BS7044,BS 1892 Part 1 2003
<a href="#">Radon</a>	Risk Assessment			<a href="#">Statutory Instrument 1999 No. 3232</a>	Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999.
<a href="#">Tree Safety</a>	Risk Assessment		Annual and following any works that could have caused damage and high winds		Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984
Water Hygiene and Safety ( <a href="#">Legionnaires' Disease</a> etc)	Risk Assessment	Statutory	Risk assessments reviewed regularly or in any case if there is a reason to believe original assessment is no longer valid	<a href="#">HSE Legionnaires' Disease – further information</a>	Health and Safety Act Work Act 1974 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations Legionnaires' Disease – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems Approved Code of Practice

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
Water Hygiene and Safety <a href="#">Legionnaires' Disease Water Systems</a> <a href="#">Cold water Systems</a>	Plan of Primary pipe work and main isolation points	Best Practice	Annual Updating		Health and Safety Act Work Act 1974 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations Legionnaires' Disease – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems Approved Code of Practice
	Visual Condition and Compliance inspection	Recommended	Annual		
	Tank condition and compliance inspection	Statutory	Annual		
	Water Quality Check	By exception from supply company	By exception		
Water Hygiene and Safety <a href="#">Legionnaires' Disease Water Systems – Low pressure hot water systems</a>	Visual condition inspection	Recommended	Annual		
	Maintenance checks on all pipe work devices (strainer, valves, blending valves, pumps etc	Best practice	Annual updating		

Aspect	Service Requirement	Statutory/Recommended/Best Practice	Frequency/Regularity	Links to Other Documents	Relevant Legislation/British Standard/Approved Code of Practice
Water Hygiene and Safety <a href="#">Legionnaires' Disease Water Systems</a> –  <a href="#">Water and Surface Temperature</a>	Water Systems Risk Assessment	Statutory	Bi-annual review, any change to the system to initiate a review or user can initiate		Health and Safety Act Work Act 1974 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations Legionnaires' Disease – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems Approved Code of Practice
	Water Quality checks	Statutory	Subject to risk assessment		
	Water and Surface Temperature	Statutory	Risk Assessment		Education (School Premises Regulations) 1999
<a href="#">Workstation Assessment</a>	Analysis of workstation to assess any health and safety risks		Change of employee or relocation of workstation	<a href="#">The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992</a>	Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
<a href="#">Working at Height</a>	Risk Assessment			<a href="#">The Work at Height Regulations 2005</a>  <a href="#">HSE Guide to Working at Height Regulations 2005</a>	Working at Height Regulations 2005
<a href="#">Working at Height – safety Eyes Bolts and Cradles</a>	Inspection and testing	Statutory	Annual		Lift Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998

## Air-Conditioning Systems

Prior to the Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulation 2007 there was no legislative requirement for air conditioning units to be inspected, other than the cooling tower type (See section on water hygiene). However on installation of an air conditioning unit the installing company is likely to insist that the client sign up to a maintenance contract of 6 monthly checks which will also include an annual maintenance schedule.

Under The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 an air conditioning system should be inspected by an energy assessor at regular intervals not exceeding 5 years, although bi annual checks and an annual maintenance schedule as described above should continue as best practice .

It is the duty of the relevant person to ensure that this is carried out; under the Regulations the relevant person is classified as the person who has control of the system.

If the system was installed after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 then it must be inspected within 5 years from the date that it was first put into use. Where the system was installed prior to 1st January 2008 an inspection must have taken place by 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009 where the effective rated output of the system is more than 250kw or if the effective rated output is more that 12kW the inspection must take place by January 2011.

Once the inspection has taken place the relevant person should retain a copy of the report.

## Asbestos

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 requires employers to prevent the exposure of their employees to asbestos as far as is reasonably practicable. If this cannot be achieved then employers must take measures to reduce the employee's exposure to asbestos to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Under Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations the "duty holder"(see earlier section), must ensure that a suitable and sufficient assessment is undertaken to determine whether asbestos is on the premises, the assessment should take into account the likely condition of any asbestos. Once the assessment has been completed then the conclusions from the assessment and any subsequent reviews must be recorded. In addition to this the duty holder must also consider building plans, other relevant information and the age of the premises, and inspect reasonably accessible parts of the premises.

Where asbestos is identified or suspected the duty holder must:

- determine the risk from asbestos
- prepare a written plan identifying the areas of the premises concerned and the measures necessary for managing the asbestos risk
- implement the measures in the plan
- record the measures taken to implement the plan

These measures should include means for:

- monitoring the condition of any asbestos or suspected asbestos
- maintaining the asbestos or safely removing it
- providing information which identifies the location and condition of identified asbestos to any person likely to disturb it. This would include caretakers and contractors working on the premises, the information must also be made available to the emergency services.

The assessment and written plan must both be reviewed if they become invalid or if there have been significant changes to the premises.

Further information is available on <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/schools.pdf>

## **Car Parking and Pedestrian/Vehicle Segregation**

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (regulation 17) covers the layout of traffic routes, traffic management systems and the provision of signage. The main areas of the regulation are:

- Every workplace shall be organised in such a way that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate in a safe manner.
- Traffic routes in a workplace shall be suitable for the persons or vehicles using them, sufficient in number, suitable positions and of sufficient size. It may sometimes be difficult to provide “sufficient separation” between pedestrians and vehicles where layouts and traffic routes have already be constructed, therefore the regulation is qualified by the statement “so far as is reasonably practicable”
- All traffic routes shall be suitably indicated, where necessary, for reasons of health and safety.

A risk assessment should therefore be carried out to include, traffic movement within the site, pedestrian/vehicle segregation, car parking and how the routes are signed. This risk assessment should consider these areas at different key times in the day e.g. if the property is a school at pupil arrival/departure times.

## **Contractor Qualification Checks**

Where a person responsible for the management of a local authority property appoints a contractor, this should be carried out in accordance with the local authority’s procurement procedures, or in consultation with the local authority, to ascertain whether call-off contracts are already in place to cover such areas of work. Where this is not possible, that person must ensure that the contractor that is proposed for carrying out the work has a current health and safety policy approved by the local authority, has current suitable insurances in place, and where necessary has the appropriate qualifications, for example CORGI or NICIEC registered for work in connection with gas and electrical installations respectively.

## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) (as amended) place a duty on employers to control the risks to employees and others which arise from exposure to substances hazardous to their health that are associated with the employers' work activities. This can be done through identifying, assessing and where possible preventing or adequately controlling exposure to the hazardous substances. The purpose of the regulation is to prevent ill health.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (Amendment) Regulation 2004 (COSHH 2004) introduced changes to the regulations; a simpler exposure limit was introduced so that workplace exposure limits now replace occupational exposure standards and maximum exposure limits.

In addition to this eight new principles of good practice were introduced by the amendment regulations<sup>3</sup> which apply regardless of whether a substance has an occupational exposure standard or maximum exposure limit.

From April 2005 employers are required to:

- Apply the eight principle of good practice to control substances hazardous to health;
- Ensure that the workplace exposure limit is not exceeded and
- Ensure that exposure to substances which can cause occupation asthma, cancer or damage to genes that can be passed on from one generation to another are reduced as low as is reasonable practicable

The eight principles of good practice are:

- 1 Design and operate processes and activities to minimise emission, release and spread of substances hazardous to health.
- 2 Take into account all relevant routes of exposure- inhalation, skin absorption and ingestion- when developing control measures.
- 3 Control exposure by measures that are proportionate to the health risk
- 4 Choose the most effective and reliable control options which minimise the escape and spread of substances hazardous to health.
- 5 Where adequate control of exposure cannot be achieved by other means, provide, in combination with other control measures, suitable personal protective equipment.
- 6 Check and review regularly all elements of control measures for their continuing effectiveness.
- 7 Inform and train all employees on the hazards and risks from the substances with which they work and the use of control measures developed to minimise the risks.
- 8 Ensure that the introduction of control measures does not increase the overall risk to health and safety."

Links to Other Information Sources:

[HSE Publication: COSHH A brief guide to the regulations](#)

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<sup>3</sup> Source: The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (Amendment) Regulations 2004

## Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)<sup>4</sup> was introduced to prevent discrimination in employment, provision of goods, services and facilities, the selling or letting of land and property, education and transport. Under Part 111 of the DDA service providers have to address any physical features which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use their services’.

This Act has been significantly extended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. It now gives disabled people rights in the areas of:

- employment
- education
- access to goods, facilities and services, including larger private clubs and transport services
- buying or renting land or property, including making it easier for disabled people to rent property and for tenants to make disability-related adaptations
- functions of public bodies, for example issuing of licenses

The DDA is aimed at protecting the rights of a wide range of disabled people besides wheelchair users, including:

- blind and partially sighted people
- deaf and hearing-impaired people
- facially disfigured people
- people with long-term illnesses or hidden impairments, for example, those with arthritis, asthma, diabetes, or Alzheimer’s Disease
- people with learning disabilities, for example, those with dyslexia
- people with mental illness

People who have had disabilities in the past are also protected from discrimination even if they no longer have the disability. Only a court can decide what constitutes disability under the terms of the DDA: if **in doubt** then it is best to assume that someone is protected by the Act.

Under the Act service providers have to make reasonable adjustments to their premises to overcome physical barriers to access. They should ensure that as far as possible, disabled “customers” are treated in the same way as non-disabled customers.

Service providers and those responsible for managing buildings need to ensure that all customers can use their service effectively. An access audit should be carried out to identify those areas where there are physical features which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person, to use the service, whether or not this is related to the building from which the service is being provided.

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Source: [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/ukpga\\_19950050\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/ukpga_19950050_en_1)

The access audit forms the basis of an action plan to consider issues such as physical constraints, alternative ways of providing the service and the reasonableness of making the adjustments identified by the access audit.

This may include the provision of any necessary extra help or special equipment as well as for example, adjustments to stairways; building entrances and exits; internal and external doors; gates; toilet, washing, and public facilities etc.

The service provider can remove, alter, or bypass the physical feature causing difficulty to a disabled person. Alternatively the service could be provided in an alternative way, this may include management solutions.

Whichever course of action the service provider decides to take the action plan should contain clear details of what is being done and what is not in terms of adjustments and the reasoning behind such decisions. This will help in the event of a customer complaint and assist in monitoring the premises should the facilities or services change in the future.

The access audit and action plan should be reviewed if there are alterations made to the premises or if the use of the premises is changed.

## **Electrical Safety**

Electrical safety in all work places and/or work activities is specifically legislated for over and above the general duty of care owed by employers to their employees and members of the public under ss2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act (1974). This expansion of responsibility for electrical safety was brought about by The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1990

### **Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)**

A portable electrical appliance can be defined as an electrical appliance which is normally connected to a lead and a plug and which can usually be easily moved.

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) covers the safe provision and use of all work equipment including portable electrical appliances, the maintenance of such equipment falls under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EWR) (PAT testing) and is part of the duty holders responsibility under PUWER.

There are three main electrical equipment classifications:

1. Class 1 equipment has its live components protected by basic insulation and is surrounded by a metal enclosure. This metal enclosure could become live in the case of the basic insulation failure and is protected by being earthed. The supply cable will have an earth wire in addition to the normal live and neutral. Examples of this sort of equipment include electric cookers, free standing electric heaters and some kettles, toasters and IT equipment.
2. Class 11 equipment separates the user from live conductors by two sets of insulation.

3. Class 111 equipment is supplied from a safety isolation transformer and will not exceed 50V, typical uses include IT equipment such as answering machines and chargers for mobile phones.

As there is such a wide range of portable electric equipment available which can be used in very varied environments the risks that are present can be very different and therefore a range of control measures is required. It is necessary to carry out a risk assessment to determine the maintenance requirement for each piece of equipment and the following five steps should be followed:

1. Identify all portable appliances that need to be maintained and tested. An inventory of this equipment should be made.
2. Carry out an assessment of the risk posed by each type of equipment,
3. Categorise into high, medium or low risk for example a PC that is rarely , if ever moved would be a low risk
4. Determine if the appliance needs to be tested and examined or examined only, taking into account the tests that can be carried out on Class 11 and 111 appliances are very limited
5. Determine the frequency of examination/testing.

There are three types of maintenance activities that are usually carried out on portable electrical appliances

1. User checks should be carried out on hand held appliances, Class 1 (earthed) and frequently moved equipment and in particular, on cable leads and extension leads.
2. Formal visual examination – this is a more formal examination of the equipment than a user check. All electrical appliances should be subject to such an examination at pre determined intervals and only a competent person should carry them out.
3. Combined inspection and test; Class 1 apparatus and leads and extension leads should be subject to a routine test in conjunction with the formal examination. A purpose made portable appliance tester should be used. Any competent person can normally carry out testing using such devices but some formal training is recommended. A record should be made and kept of the tests.

Unfortunately there are no statutory frequencies for any of the above maintenance measures, however in order to satisfy the general legal requirement to prevent “danger” some, all or a combination of the maintenance activities as set out above should be carried out.

The risk assessment carried out on the equipment will determine any further measures that will be required to be implemented.

Links to other information sources: Maintaining portable electrical equipment in offices and other low-risk environments

INDG236 HSE Books 1996 (single copies free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 1272 4)

## **Fixed Electrical Installation Tests**

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 state that all electrical systems and equipment used in the working environment should be in a safe condition. The installations should be maintained to prevent danger; the Health & Safety Executive recommend that to comply with the regulations, an appropriate system of periodic visual inspection and testing by a competent person should be implemented at all places of work. The frequency of inspection must be determined taking into account:

1. the type of installation
2. its use and operation
3. the frequency and quality of maintenance
4. the external influences to which it is subjected

Further guidance

[Electrical Safety Council at www.esc.org.uk](http://www.esc.org.uk)

## **Emergency Lighting**

Emergency Lighting is lighting that is installed in a building to provide a degree of illumination when the normal lighting fails. In terms of fire safety the most important component of an emergency lighting is the “escape lighting” which is provided to illuminate escape routes to an extent sufficient to enable occupants to evacuate the building in safety. Under BS 5266 Part 1, there are recommendations for routine inspection and testing of emergency lighting. This includes daily, monthly, six monthly and three yearly regimes of inspection and/or testing.

## **Extraction Systems**

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires employers to provide and maintain working conditions that are safe and without risk to the health of employees, so far as is reasonably practicable. COSHH (see earlier section) expands on this general duty and requires employers to prevent worker exposure to hazardous substances or, where this is not reasonably practicable, to ensure adequate control. Employees are required to make full and proper use of the control measures provided and to report any defects in them promptly to their employer.

Adequate control may mean the installation of suitable extraction systems. Where such systems are installed they must be adequately maintained to ensure that they are kept in an efficient and effective working order, and they must be examined and tested against their performance standard, records of these checks must be kept for at least five years. Local Exhaust Ventilation Systems (LEVs) must be examined and tested generally every fourteen months.

## **Fire**

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places general fire safety duties on the “responsible person”. The responsible person is the employer where the premises are to any extent under his/her control. Where this does not occur then the responsible person is:

- the person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by that person of a trade, business or other undertaking
- the owner, where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by that person of a trade, business or other undertaking.

The general fire safety duties placed upon the responsible person are:

- General fire precautions are to be taken that will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of any employees. In relation to relevant persons who are not employees, the responsible person must take general fire precautions “as may be required in the circumstances of the case” to ensure that the premises are safe.
- A suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which persons are exposed must be made, this is known as the “fire risk assessment”
- Appropriate arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures must be undertaken.
- Where a dangerous substance is present in or on the premises, risks from that dangerous substance must either be eliminated or reduced.
- Premises must be equipped with appropriate fire-fighting equipment and with fire detectors and alarms. Any non-automatic fire-fighting equipment provided must be easily accessible, simple to use and indicated by signs.
- Routes to emergency exits from premises and the exits themselves are to be kept clear at all times and emergency routes and exits must lead as directly as possible to a place of safety,
- Procedures for serious and imminent danger must be established.
- Any facilities, equipment and devices provided must be maintained in an efficient state, working order and good repair.
- The responsible person must appoint one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking the preventive and protective measures.
- Employees must be provided with comprehensible and relevant information.
- The employer of any employees from an outside undertaking who are working in or on the premises must be provided with comprehensible and relevant information on the risks.
- At the time when they are first employed employees must be provided with adequate safety training and if they become exposed to new or increased risks.
- Where two or more responsible persons share, or have duties in respect of the premises, each person must co-operate with the other responsible person concerned
- Every employee must, while at work take reasonable care for the safety of himself and of other relevant persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work.

### **Fire Risk Assessment and Management Plan**

As stated above “a suitable and sufficient assessment” of the risks to which persons are exposed must be undertaken, this is known as the fire risk assessment and it should be carried out to help determine the chances of a fire occurring and determine the control measures that will be required. The Home Office publication, Fire Safety: An Employers Guide, recommends, a five stage approach to carrying out a risk assessment:

1. Identify the fire hazards.
2. Identify people at risk
3. Evaluate and remove or reduce the risk where possible
4. Record the findings
5. Review and revise the assessment

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/150949>

### **Fire Detection and Alarm Systems**

Fire detection and alarm systems should have a weekly alarm test with all call points being tested over a 13 week cycle. The system should also be subject to quarterly and annual inspections and tests by a competent person.

### **Fire Doors**

All fire doors and associated hardware must remain in efficient working order and should be regularly checked and maintained by a competent person in accordance with the relevant British Standard and the manufacturer's recommendations; it is advisable to keep a record of any maintenance. The inspection of fire doors should include some or all of the following:

- Self closing device operate properly
- Hold open device release when the fire alarm operates
- Glazed panels are intact and un damaged
- Warning signs are in place "Automatic Fire Door – Keep Clear"
- Door open and close freely and there is no physical damage to the door
- There is no distortion or warping of the door or frame
- Seals and smoke strips are in place and not damaged
- Hinges and locks are properly lubricated

### **Fire Fighting Equipment**

#### **Extinguishers**

These should be maintained and inspected by a competent person at least once a year. This involves a visual inspection of the extinguisher and a check of the contents and stored pressure. A written record should be kept of the date of the last maintenance examination and this should usually be attached to the body of the extinguisher.

#### **Hose Reels**

Hose reels are for the use of the fire service and staff should not normally be trained in the use of this equipment. All hose reels should be inspected on a yearly basis by a competent person.

#### **Fixed Systems**

Fixed systems are those which when activated by the warning/alarm system, release the extinguishing medium e.g. sprinkler systems. All fixed systems should be inspected on a yearly basis or to manufacturer's guidelines. It is advisable to keep a record of any maintenance and testing.

## **Fire Service Facilities**

Facilities for the fire service may include dry riser, access for emergency vehicles, emergency switches for installations and information in respect of the premises and its contents. Where these facilities are provided they should be maintained and kept in good order.

### Links

Sector guides on the RRO e.g., Risk Assessment Guide for Educational Premises 2006 [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyrisk6](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyrisk6)

## **Fuel Oil Storage**

The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001 cover the storage of oil at industrial, commercial and institutional premises where the amount stored is more than 200 litres and it is stored outside and above ground. This includes storage at schools, museums, offices, businesses and warehouses.

All tanks, bunds and pipework should be regularly checked for signs of damage and it is recommended that they are checked at least weekly with a more detailed annual inspection and service by qualified inspectors to ensure that any potential defects are found and rectified

There are security issues regarding oil storage areas and these areas should be as resistant as possible to unauthorised interference and vandalism. If there are any permanent taps or valves through which oil can be discharged from the tank to open areas then these should be fitted with a lock and should be locked shut when not in use. Where appropriate, notices should be displayed telling users to keep valves and trigger guns locked when they are not in use. Pumps should also be protected from unauthorised use, taps and valves should be marked to show whether they are open or closed. Where these are not in use then they should be fitted with a blanking cap or plug.

## **First Aid Equipment**

Under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulation 1981 all establishments should provide at least one first-aid box. All first aid boxes, first aid kits and first aid rooms (where provided) should be checked regularly to ensure no contents are outside their expiry date.

## **Gas Safety**

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 place duties on gas consumers, installer, suppliers and landlords. It is the duty of the employer to ensure any gas appliance associated pipe work and flues in the work places are maintained in a safe condition. These regulations link with other safety controls on combustion equipment, such as the Building Regulations, which provide standards for ventilation and flues.

By law anyone carrying out work on gas appliance or fittings as part of their business must be competent and registered with CORGI Gas Registration, see section also on Contractor Qualification Checks. By law a gas appliance or fittings must not be used if it is known or suspected that they are unsafe.

In the HSE Approved Code of practice it is recommended that periodic routine maintenance is carried out gas appliances, pipe work and flues by a CORGI registered person. Routine maintenance would normally involve ongoing regular periodic examination of the installation/appliance and remedial action taken where necessary. Reference should be made to the manufactures installation instructions for servicing intervals, however where this is not available the physical condition of the flue, air vents and pipe work should be checked for deterioration and performance checks carried out, where necessary remedial should be taken.

Further detailed information is available from HSE publications; Safety in the Installation and Use of Gas Systems and Appliances. Gas safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L56 (Second Edition) HSE Books.

## Glazing

Glazing requirements are covered under Regulation 14 of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. The duty to comply with the regulations will normally fall to the employer or those in control of the premises. Under the Regulation every window or other transparent or translucent surface in a wall, partition, door or gate should, **where necessary for reasons of health or safety**, be of a safety material or be protected against breakage and be appropriately marked.

As the Regulation only requires action "**where necessary for reasons of health or safety**". It is necessary to assess every window, door etc to establish whether there is a risk of anyone being hurt if people or objects come into contact with it, or if it breaks.

This risk assessment needs to take into account all relevant factors such as the location of the glazing, the activities taking place, the volume of traffic and pedestrians, and any previous experience of incidents. Glazing in some locations may be a higher risk, for example doors and windows which are at or below waist level or in particular areas of a building where the activity taking place may increase the risk e.g. a school hall used for sport.

If it is assessed that there is no risk then it is not necessary to take any further action. Where there is a risk then further action is required in order to comply with the regulations to:

- prevent people or objects coming into contact with the glazing, or
- upgrade the glazing so that if it breaks, it breaks safely, and
- mark large expanses of glazing in some way so that people know it is there

Following the risk assessment it may be necessary to take further action however this will depend on the individual circumstances examples of further action that may be required could be to replace the glazing with a safety material, or apply a safety film which prevents the glass from shattering in a dangerous manner.

## Hydrotherapy Pools and Swimming Pools

Under the Health and Safety Act Work Act 1974 it is the responsibility of swimming pool operators “to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of their operations and to identify necessary control measures. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment for a swimming pool would have to take account of the whole user population of the swimming pool and the fact that a fatal incident i.e. drowning can occur very quickly.

The Health and Safety Executive publication HSG179 Managing health and safety in swimming pools (HSG179) is a comprehensive guidance document on managing health and safety in swimming pools to assist pool operators and pool hirers put in place appropriate safety precautions. When considering appropriate control measure to be put in place it is recommended that operators take into account this guidance.

### Further Guidance

Authoritative guidance on the treatment of water in swimming pools (ref 1) is available from the Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group [www.pwtag.org](http://www.pwtag.org) .

Swimming Pool Water – Treatment and Quality Standards, ISBN 0 951 7007 6 6.  
Advice on spa pools and hydrotherapy pools is available from the Health Protection Agency [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

### **HSE - Entertainment: Managing health and safety in swimming pools (HSG179)**

## Lifts and Hoists

The maintenance and inspection of lifts and hoists is a complex area covered by numerous pieces of legislation:

- Under regulation 5 of Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulation 1998 lifts need to be maintained in a safe condition and free from fault and defects
- Under Regulation 9 of Lift and Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) lifts must be tested and inspected by a competent person at regular intervals. U
- Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999 there is a duty placed on employers to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks associated with their work activities. This includes the risks associated with lifts.
- Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) there is a duty to ensure the health safety and welfare of employees including ensuring that safety risk are not created by the type and use of lifts (and escalator) within the premises. This includes ensuring that lifts are maintained, serviced, checked and inspected as required and otherwise checking that they remain in a good, safe condition.
- There are similar duties to non-employees which are created by s3 (1) of the HSWA. Section 4 places similar duties on those in “control” of non-domestic premises that are used as a place of work by someone else’s employees. Basically this places duties on landlords/occupiers of non-domestic premises used as a place of work.
- Under the Lift Regulations 1997 all lifts supplied after June 1999 must comply with the Lifts Regulations 1997. The regulations require lifts and their associated safety components to satisfy the relevant essential health and safety requirements, meet

appropriate national standards, undergo the appropriate conformity assessment procedure, have the CE marking applied (if necessary), have an EC declaration of conformity and be safe.

Under The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) a duty holder has a legal responsibility to ensure that any lift on the premises is thoroughly examined and safe to use.

A thorough examination will entail a systematic and detailed examination of the lift and all its associated equipment by a competent person. In order to determine the extent of the thorough examination, the competent person should assess the risks, taking into account factors such as where the lift will be used, frequency of use, the weight of loads to be lifted and its age and condition.

Part of the thorough examination may include some testing, if considered necessary, the thorough examination may also be supplemented by an inspection. Inspections should be carried out at suitable interval between thorough examinations.

As well as considering the risks associated with lifts in normal use, it is important to consider the safety of users in the event of the lift breaking down or stopping between floors. It may be appropriate to set up breakdown response contract in addition to normal maintenance contracts. It may be appropriate to train some employees in lift lowering and emergency door opening. In order to alert people to any problem, consideration should be given to providing a suitable means of raising the alarm (e.g. alarm call buttons, emergency telephones). In order to avoid panic in the event of an electrical failure it may also be appropriate to provide emergency lighting.

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 require employers to ensure that any equipment that is used for lifting people is thoroughly examined and inspected by a competent person at intervals of no more than six months. Passenger and mixed use lifts and escalators fall into this category. Where a lift is only used to carry goods then this interval can be increased to every twelve months.

A competent person is someone with sufficient technical and practical knowledge of the lift to be able to detect defects and assess how significant they are. The competent person should also be sufficiently independent and impartial to allow them to make an objective assessment of the lift and it is therefore not advisable for the same person who performs routine maintenance to carry out the thorough examination, as this would mean that they would then be responsible for assessing their own work.

As an item of lifting equipment the safe working load of a lift must be determined and displayed in a suitable, prominent place.

(Guidelines on the thorough examination and testing of lifts (SaFed lifts guidelines) LG1 Safety Assessment Federation, 1998 ISBN 1901212 53 1)

## **Mobile Buildings**

Due to the fact that mobile buildings are designed and constructed as temporary structures it is recommended that an annual inspection is carried out on their structural stability.

## **Playground and Gymnasium Equipment**

Due to the very use that PE equipment is put to it carries a high risk and requires regular inspection. British Standard 1892 Part 1 2003 states “an inspection should be carried out at least once a year”. There are also British Standards to cover playground equipment (BS 5696) and for surfaces (BS 7188 and 7044) outside play areas should comply with BS5696

## **Radon –**

Radon is gas which is odourless, tasteless and colourless and can only be detected using specialised equipment. Radon occurs naturally in rocks and soils throughout the country although levels tend to be higher in some granite areas. Radon can be found in high concentrations in buildings as it tends to be sucked in to the building from soil.

It may then collect in buildings and under certain conditions can reach concentrations where the risk to people in the workplace requires control under the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999.

Under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 in areas affected by Radon employers should undertake an initial assessment to determine whether there may be a radon hazard within the workplace, this includes cellars and basements.

Radon surveys should be conducted in any building where its location and characteristics suggest that elevated levels may be found. Due to the fact that radon levels can vary widely throughout the day and from season to season measurements should be made over a period of three months and the annual average estimated using seasonal correction factors.

Further details on levels of radon in buildings and remedial measures to be taken can be found on <http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/42-1.htm>

## **Trees Safety**

As well as responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, an occupier of land where a tree stands has responsibilities under the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984. An occupier of land on which a tree stands will normally be liable for any personal injury or other damages caused by a tree breaking or falling where a tree is hazardous because of decay or structural weakness and shows external signs of being in such a condition. It should be noted that within the provisions of the previously mentioned Acts the court expect occupiers to be prepared for children to behave less carefully than an adult for example, by climbing trees which may have weak branches.

Therefore it is important that a “suitable and sufficient” risk assessment should be carried out on the trees on a site. An effective system for identifying the risks from trees should meet the requirements set out in the management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999 and the associated ACoP see also the Health and Safety Executive Guide Five Steps to Risk Assessment previously referred to.

The HSE in circular; 'Management of the risk from falling trees' suggest that a suitable risk assessment for trees should address the following:

1. "An overall assessment of risks from trees, particularly identifying groups of trees by their position and degree of public access. This will enable the risks associated with tree stocks to be prioritised and help identify any checks or inspections needed. As a minimum, trees should be divided into two zones: one zone where there is frequent public access to trees (e.g. in and around picnic areas, schools, children's playground,); and a second zone where trees are not subject to frequent public access. As a rough guide 'trees subject to frequent public access are those that are closely approached by many people every day. Amps may be useful as individual records for individual trees are unlikely to be necessary if zones and the trees in the zones are clearly defined.
2. For trees in a frequently visited zone, a system for periodic, proactive checks is appropriate. This should involve a quick visual check for obvious signs that a tree is likely to be unstable and be carried out by a person with a working knowledge of trees and their defects, but who need not be an arboriculture specialist. Duty holders should ensure that any system that is put in place for managing tree safety is properly applied and monitored.
3. A short record of when an area or zone or occasionally an individual tree has been checked or inspected with details of any defects found and action taken.
4. A system for obtaining specialist assistance/remedial action when a check reveals defects out with the experience and knowledge of the person carrying out the check.
5. A system to enable people to report damage to trees, such as vehicle collisions, and to trigger checks following potentially damaging activities such as work by the utilities in the vicinity of trees or severe gales.
6. Occasionally a duty holder may have responsibility for trees that have serious structural faults but which they decide to retain. Where such a condition is suspected and the tree also poses a potentially serious risk because, for example its proximity to an area of high public uses, a specific assessment for that tree and specific management measure, are likely to be appropriate.
7. Once a tree has been identified y a check to have a structural fault that presents an elevated risk, action should be planned and taken to manage the risk. Any arboricultural work required should be carried out by a competent arboriculturist; as such work tends to present a relatively high risk to the workers involved. Duty holder should not be encouraged to fell or prune trees unnecessarily.
8. Inspection of individual trees will only be necessary where a tree is in, or adjacent to, an area of high public use, has structural faults that are likely to make it unstable and a decision has been made to retain the tree with these faults.
9. Monitoring to ensure that the arrangements are implemented in practice."

For more detailed guidance in this area see HSE website: [Management of the risk from falling trees](#) and the [Forestry Commission web site Hazards from trees; A general guide](#)

## **Water Hygiene and Safety**

### **Legionella**

As stated previously under s2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 employers so far as is reasonably, practicable, have to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees. The risk assessment of work activities and premises required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is of particular relevance when considering the health and safety risks from disease. Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) (COSHH) pathogenic bacteria, including legionellae are deemed to be “substance hazardous to health” and therefore are subject to the assessment, prevention/control and monitoring, provision of these Regulations.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 covers the risk from legionella bacteria which may arise from work activities. In addition to the legislation mentioned above The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations and Legionnaires’ Disease – The Control of Legionella bacteria in water systems Approved Code of Practice apply to the control of legionella bacteria in water systems.

An employer or a person in control of the premises (e.g. a landlord), must identify and assess the sources of risk; (it may be necessary to call on outside assistance to complete this), prepare a scheme (or course of action) for preventing or controlling the risk and implementing and managing the scheme. A person must be appointed to be managerially responsible, sometimes referred to as the ‘responsible person’. This responsible person must keep records and check that what has been done is effective; and, if appropriate, notify the local authority that there is a cooling tower(s) on site

In order to carry out the risk assessment an employer should find out if the water systems (including the equipment associated with the system such as pumps, heat exchangers, showers etc) are likely to create a risk. If after carrying out the risk assessment it is considered that the risks are insignificant then no further action is needed other than to review the assessment periodically in case anything changes in the system.

If a risk is identified which cannot be prevented then proper controls must be introduced. In order to control the risks it will be necessary to implement a successful management policy, have competent staff and ensure that proper control strategies are put in place. One way of preventing the risk of legionella is by looking at the type of water system needed. For example it may be possible to replace a wet cooling tower with a dry air cooled system. .

A written scheme should be prepared which sets out how it is intended to control the risk from legionella. This should:

- describe the system (an up to date schematic diagrams will be adequate to do this);
- advise who is responsible for carrying out the assessment and managing its implementation;
- set out the safe and correct operation of the system;

- describe what control methods and other precautions will be used and,
- provide details of the checks that will be carried out on the control scheme and how often they will be carried out.

It is important to appoint someone to take responsibility for managing the control scheme that has been put in place. The 'responsible person' needs to be competent – this means that they need to have sufficient knowledge and experience of the system to enable them to manage and control the scheme effectively. If there is more than one person responsible for managing the system and/or control scheme, then it is important to ensure that everyone knows their responsibilities and how they fit into the overall management of the system.

Where contractors are employed to carry out water treatment or other work it is still the responsibility of the appointed responsible person to ensure that the treatment is carried out to the required standards. Before appointing a contractor it is necessary to be satisfied that they are capable of doing the work to the required standard. The Health and Safety Executive has prepared A Code of Conduct for Service Providers to assist with this.

The significant findings from the risk assessment should be kept in writing along with details of any monitoring or checking that is carried out. A written record should also be kept of the written scheme and who is responsible for managing the scheme prepared, the results of the routine monitoring should also be recorded and all of these records need to be kept for a minimum of five years. Risk assessments should be updated every two years or earlier if circumstances change i.e. when any changes are made to the system.

Further Guidance

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/info.htm> where you will find useful links to the following documents:

- **Legionnaires' disease - Essential information for providers of residential accommodation**
- **Legionnaires Disease - A guide for Employers**
- **Legionnaires Disease: The control of legionella bacteria in water systems, approved code of practice and guidance (L8) Health and Safety Executive, 2000. ISBN 0717617726. Available from HSE Books**
- **Legionnaires' Disease: Controlling the risks associated with using spa baths [PDF 24kb]**
- **HSE Research Report RR140 Evaluation of HSC's ACOP and guidance 'Legionnaires disease: control of legionella bacteria in water systems' (L8)**

### [Water and Surface Temperature Restrictions](#)

There is a risk of scalding to individuals from surface areas such as radiators and hot water pipes and from water which is too hot at point of use for example washbasin and baths.

Under the Education (School Premises Regulation) 1999 there is a requirement that the temperature of water at point of use should not be above 43°C for baths and showers

and where occupants are severely disabled, in addition to this it is recommended that hot water supplies to washbasins in nursery and primary schools are limited to 43°C

Under these regulations in a special school or teaching accommodation used by a nursery class in a school the surface temperature of any radiator, including exposed pipework, which is in a position where it may be touched by a pupil should not exceed 43°C

The Health and Safety of those individuals who use care services is covered under the general requirements of Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and also by the risk assessment requirement of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. The maximum surface temperature of space heating devices in care establishment should not exceed 43°C and the temperature of water at point of use should be no more than 44°C

The risk of burns from hot surfaces may be reduced by:

1. Providing low surface temperature heat emitters, e.g. cool wall;
2. Locating sources of heat out of reach, e.g. at high-level;
3. Guarding the heated areas, e.g. providing radiator covers, covering exposed pipework;
4. Reducing the flow temperatures (although usually not practicable in existing heating systems without sacrificing their effectiveness).

The risk of scalding may be reduced by carrying out a risk assessment for the individuals concerned and introducing appropriate control measures

Suitable arrangements should be in place to ensure that control measures are in place and functioning effectively. Adequate training and supervision should be given to staff to ensure that they understand the risks and precautions to be taken and also the need to report any difficulties to a responsible person.

Further guidance

[Education \(School Premises Regulation\) 1999](#)  
[Building Bulletin 87 \(2<sup>nd</sup> Edition\)](#)

HSE: [Burning Risks from Hot Surfaces in health and social care](#)  
[Scalding Risks from hot water in health and social care](#)

## **Workstation Assessment**

Under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 employers are required to perform a suitable and sufficient analysis of work stations used by users to enable an assessment of the health and safety risks to be carried out. A user means an employee who habitually uses Display Screen Equipment as a significant part of their normal work. This assessment will need to be reviewed or updated if there is a significant or major change to the equipment, the environment, the furniture, the task or the software. Where a work station is relocated then it should also be re-assessed.

Where an individual workstation is shared by more than one person, then the analysis should be carried out in respect of each person. A record of the analysis should be kept. The user or operator must be take part in the assessment as some of the required criteria in the analysis and assessment may be subjective.

Where risks have been identified through the analysis then these must be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. The risks identified could relate to physical problems, visual fatigue and mental stress and apply to both users and operators, the risks identified in the assessment must be remedied as quickly as possible:

## **Working at Height**

### **Fall Protection**

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 covers all workplaces where work is carried out at height, as well as covering construction sites, the Regulations cover offices, shops and schools. A risk assessment must be carried out under regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, where possible work at height must be avoided. Where work at height cannot be avoided work equipment must be used to prevent falls. Where the risk of falls cannot be eliminated, measures must be taken to minimise the distance and consequences of any fall. The duty holder must ensure that equipment used to work at height such as scaffolding and ladders are maintained and inspected. Where such equipment is exposed to conditions which may cause deterioration then they must be inspected at suitable intervals and following any exceptional circumstances.

### **Window Cleaners**

The Workplace (Health and Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require employers, and persons who have control of a workplace to ensure that all windows and skylights in a workplace are designed or constructed so as to enable them to be cleaned safely. This requirement allows equipment used in conjunction with the windows or skylights, or any other safety devices fitted to the building, i.e. anchorage points to be taken into account. The Approved Code of Practice that accompanies these regulations gives a number of measures which may be taken to comply, e g anchorage points for safety harnesses, suitable points for tying ladder more than 6m in length and fitting windows that can be cleaned easily from inside.

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 covers window cleaning activities when carried out at height. They specify that a risk assessment must determine the necessity of working at height. Where it is not possible to avoid working at height then a hierarchy of control measures is specified.

### **Further information**

The following HSE publications give further general guidance:

*Workplace health, safety and welfare: Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 Approved Code of Practice* L24 HSE Books 1992 ISBN 0 7176 0413 6

Workplace health, safety and welfare: A short guide for managers INDG244 HSE Books 1997 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 1328 3) Web version: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg244.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg244.pdf)