

# HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION SHEET 8

## **Equipment For Use At Work**

Whatever equipment you provide for use at work must be safe and must be used safely. The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 apply to all work equipment, including second hand, hired or leased equipment.

As an employer you must ensure the following:

### **1. That The Equipment Is Suitable For The Purpose For Which It Is Used**

- Consider its design e.g.. scaffolding may be more appropriate than ladders; chairs for use with DSE may have particular design criteria.
- Consider where it will be used and what extra hazards it may introduce e.g. the equipment will introduce noise; using a fork lift truck to eliminate manual handling problems may introduce risks associated with machinery and operator safety.
- Ensure it is only used for what it was designed to.

### **2. That The Equipment Is Properly maintained And Kept In Good Repair**

- You may need to carry out routine or planned maintenance if the lack of it could lead to the equipment failing dangerously e.g. examination and replacement of components in a lift or hoist could prevent a catastrophic failure.
- It is a good idea to keep records of all maintenance work carried out and ensure they are kept up to date.

### **3. That Safe Maintenance Procedures Are Followed**

- When maintenance operations are carried out the equipment should be shut down if there is likely to risk to health and safety. If not, then steps should be taken to enable it to be done without risk to health and safety, or means of protection provided for persons who may be exposed to hazards.
- Consider providing temporary guards, limited movement controls or some other safeguards.
- Personal protective equipment may be required.

### **4. That All Staff Are Competent**

- All persons who use or supervise the use of work equipment must have adequate information, instruction and training in using the equipment.
- Information and instruction must be readily understood by the persons concerned. It should cover foreseeable problems e.g. machinery breakdowns; dealing with operational faults.

## **5. Effective Guarding**

- There are requirements for effective guarding of any dangerous parts of machinery and for the prevention or control; of certain specified hazards e.g. an article falling or being ejected from equipment or equipment catching fire or overheating.
- Find out if there are any guarding requirements for your equipment. Consult manufacturers or suppliers of the equipment.

## **6. Proper Equipment Controls**

Where appropriate there must be provision of controls e.g. start, stop and emergency stop controls. When provided they must be:

- So positioned as not to cause a risk to health and safety.
- Readily identifiable.
- Clearly visible.

## **7. A Means Of Isolating Equipment**

A suitable means of isolating machines from their source of energy must also be provided if it is appropriate. It should be:

- Clearly visible.
- Readily identifiable.
- Secure i.e. not capable of inadvertent reconnection.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

There are requirements relating to the following:

- Equipment must be stable where necessary e.g. by clamping.
- Suitable and sufficient lighting must be provided.
- Clearly visible markings must be provided for reasons of health and safety e.g. stop and start controls.
- Warnings and warning devices may be required, which should be unambiguous, easily perceived and easily understood.

For more detailed free information visit [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)