

Lighting

Introduction

Shropshire Council regards the provision of a safe and well-lit working environment as fundamental to the health, safety and well-being of the work force.

Service Areas will take all reasonable steps to ensure that lighting is adequate and appropriate for the task at all times.

Any complaints or problems regarding lighting should be reported at once to the responsible person so that management can take steps to remedy the situation.

The implementation of this arrangement requires the co-operation of all members of management and staff.

Service Area Managers will need to:

- Ensure that at no workplace will the lighting level fall below the absolute minimum intensity required for the safe performance of the task.
- Ensure that there is no disabling or distracting glare caused by lighting equipment, sunlight through the windows, bright room surfaces or reflections on equipment.
- Confirm that for any machine, appliance, apparatus or tool the lighting is sufficient to provide the required level of task illumination; if the task requires higher levels of illumination, supplementary local lighting will be provided.
- Ensure that the minimum levels of emergency lighting that are required in various areas, as set out in BS 5266, are met, giving special attention to changes in level and areas where safety equipment is located, such as fire extinguishers, eye-baths and fire alarm call points.
- Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all workers have natural light in their workplace by adjusting the position and layout of workplaces within the building in relation to the window and roof light positions, and by maintaining a tidy office and clean windows so that natural light is not obscured (the requirements of the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations means that the brightness of certain windows may need to be controlled which may reduce the level of daylight available in some areas).
- In display screen areas, arrange the lighting system, the workplace and the equipment used so no distracting reflections appear on the screen so that the visual environment provides the appropriate contrast between the screen and its background (windows will where necessary, be provided with adjustable blinds or covering to limit their brightness).
- Ensure that lighting equipment is in such a position or hung at such a level so as to avoid the risks of hitting operatives or items that they are carrying.

- Ensure that lighting equipment is so located or so guarded that operatives and combustible items are not likely to come into contact with hot components of the lights or with surface heated up by the lights.
- Ensure that all lighting equipment is positioned so as to provide safe access for lamp changing and cleaning; where lighting is positioned in difficult places, such as over large stairwells, in atria or over process equipment, then winching or access equipment will be provided.
- Carry out checks of all the above aspects of lighting at regular intervals and whenever changes are made to existing workplaces.

Safe system of work

Lighting is one of the more important environmental criteria that go to make a safe and effective working environment for the workforce. In order to ensure that it does not adversely affect working conditions, the following precautions should be taken.

- Failure of lighting or any defects observed should be reported to a responsible person.
- Defects and lighting shortfalls to be remedied by a competent person
- If existing lighting is not sufficient for the task additional lighting to be provided.
- Portable lighting equipment (such as lamps) must not be placed in such a position that it will impede access or be in close proximity to persons or property.
- Windows blinds are to be used control brightness or glare from sunlight.
- The workplace must be kept tidy and items must not be allowed to accumulate on windows sills, so that natural light is obscured.

The provision of a safe and well-lit environment is fundamental to good working practice. Three most important steps are to:

- Monitor all changes to the type and location of the workplaces, the equipment being used, the tasks being carried out and their relationship to the lighting equipment and windows; assess the impact of the changes on the safety of the occupants and take any necessary action
- Review all plans for changes to the existing buildings, including plans for extensions and new buildings, to ensure that the designers have taken into account the needs of your safety plan and take any action necessary to ensure the safety of the occupants
- Select and position all lighting equipment so that it presents no danger to the occupants either during normal operation or during maintenance or replacement.

Record keeping

Records of assessment of risk on any workplace, workstation or working area should be kept.

A record of all complaints relating to lighting and any subsequent investigation or action should be maintained, as should a log book of the tests of the emergency lighting system carried out at the intervals stated in BS5266 (Code of practice for the emergency lighting of premises other than cinemas and certain other specified premises used for entertainment).

Summary of statutory duties

The general duty to ensure the health and safety of employees under s.2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act includes a duty to provide adequate lighting so that work can be done safely and workers' health and eyesight is not endangered.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that all employers make an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees and others visiting the premises. In lighting terms, this generally relates to the level of the lighting, glare from the lighting and the safety of the lighting equipment itself.

Regulation 21 of the Provision of Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 requires that every employer shall ensure that suitable and sufficient lighting is provided at any place where a person uses work equipment, taking account of the operations to be carried out.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require that lighting shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, be of natural light (regulation 8). The regulation also requires that suitable and sufficient emergency lighting shall be provided in any room in circumstances in which persons at work are especially exposed to danger in the event of failure of artificial lighting.

As well as an immediate assessment of all workstations to prevent risk to the workers, the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 also require that any new workstation shall meet the schedule of minimum requirements and that any existing workstation shall be upgraded if necessary to meet these requirements.

One of these requirements relates to lighting and states that:

- Any room lighting or task lighting provided shall ensure satisfactory lighting conditions and an appropriate contrast between the screen and the background environment, taking into account the type of work and the visual requirements of the operator or user
- Possible disturbing glare or reflection on the screen or other equipment shall be prevented by co-ordinating the workplace and workstation layout with the positioning and technical characteristics of the artificial light source
- Workstations shall be so designed that sources of light, such as windows and other openings, transparent or translucent walls and brightly coloured fixtures or walls cause no direct glare and no disturbing reflections on the screen
- Windows shall be fitted with a suitable system of adjustable covering (such as window blinds) to attenuate the daylight that falls on the workstation.

The Workplace Regulations also require that the workplace and the equipment, devices and systems to which these Regulations apply shall be

maintained (including cleaned as appropriate) in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

Specific lighting requirements are laid down in other Regulations, such as regulation 15 of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

See also:

- _ HSE document 'Lighting at Work' - HS(G) 38
- _ Code of Interior Lighting - Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers

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