

EYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety Executive advises that over 200 people lose their lives at work in the UK each year. Additionally, about 150,000 non-fatal injuries are reported and an estimated 2 million suffer from ill health caused or made worse by their work. Local councils are made up of over 80,000 councillors and employ over 25,000 staff and have a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of its employees and others.

Further more comprehensive information can be accessed at www.hse.gov.uk

1. THE GENERAL DUTY OF EMPLOYERS

- a) it shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees
- b) without prejudice to the generality of an employer's duty under the preceding subsection, the matters to which that duty extends include in particular
 - i. the provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health
 - ii. arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
 - iii. the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonable practicable, the health and safety of his employees
 - iv. so far as is reasonably practicable as regards any place of work under the employer's control, the maintenance of it in a condition that is safe and without risks to health and the provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from it that are safe and without such risks
 - v. the provision and maintenance of a working environment for his employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work
- c) If a local council employs officers who work at home, they will still have duties to ensure their health, safety and welfare

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

- a) employers with fewer than 5 employees are exempt from the health and safety at work duty, however, as many local councils have fewer than 5 employees, NALC strongly recommends that all councils should have a written policy.

3. DUTIES TO NON-EMPLOYEES (including contractors)

- a) local councils commonly enter into contracts for the provision of services and should ensure that they
 - i. do not expose contractors to risks to their health and safety and

- ii. such contractors do not expose non-employees to risks to their health and safety.
- b) on a practicable level, local councils should ensure all their independent contractors are competent to undertake the work and request that they have public liability insurance cover
- c) local councils regularly employ people to provide services to them in land or premises which they own or manage and should take note that they have a duty to their health, safety and welfare

4. DUTY OF EMPLOYEES

- a) it shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take care for the health and safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work, and
- b) as regards any duty or requirement imposed on his employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with him so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with

5. REGULATIONS AND CODES OF PRACTICE

The 1974 Act is supplemented by a number of regulations and codes of practice. A brief outline follows, more information can be found from the HSE.

5.1 Management of health and safety at work regulations

a) Employers are required to carry out Risk Assessments (a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people). Risk assessment should be a practicable exercise, aimed at getting the right controls in place.

Step 1 – identify the hazards

Step 2 – decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3 – evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Step 4 – record the findings and implement them

Step 5 – review the risk assessment and update if necessary

b) employers are required to appoint one or more competent persons to assist in completing risk assessments and time is available to complete the task

5.2 The workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) regulations

a) Employers have a duty to keep employees safe, regulations cover a range of diverse issues including

ventilation, temperatures, work in hot or cold environments, lighting, cleanliness and waste materials, room dimensions and space, workstations and seating, maintenance, falls into dangerous substances, transparent or translucent doors, gates, walls or windows, windows, doors and gates, escalators and moving walkways, sanitary conveniences and washing facilities, drinking water, accommodation for clothing and facilities for changing and facilities for rest and to eat meals

Further information can be found in the HSE publication 'Workplace health and safety and welfare – a short guide for managers'

5.3 Personal protective equipment at work regulations

a) the main requirement of the regulations is that personal protective equipment is to be supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways

5.4 Manual handling operations regulations

a) manual handling is transporting or supporting loads by hand or using bodily force. Manual handling causes more than a third of all over three day injuries reported each year.

b) regulations require employers to:

- i. avoid the need for hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable
- ii. assess the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling that cannot be avoided
- iii. reduce the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable

5.5 Health and safety (Display Screen Equipment) regulations

Using a computer or other kinds of display screen equipment can give rise to back problems, repetitive strain injury, or other musculoskeletal disorders. Work with a screen does not cause eye damage, but many users experience temporary eye strain or stress.

6. OTHER REGULATIONS

There are other regulations which may be relevant to local councils, including; Work at height, electricity at work, provision and use of work equipment, lifting operations and lifting equipment, confined spaces, first aid, regulatory reform, reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences

7. CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

Two sets of regulations govern how and when employers should consult with their employees. These are:

- a) the health and safety (consultation with employees) regulations
- b) the safety representatives and safety committees regulations

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT

Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive or local authorities enforce Health and Safety Law. Inspectors have broad powers; powers of entry, can serve improvement notices, can serve prohibition notices, can serve a notice requiring information and can commence criminal proceedings for the breaches of the duties and obligations set out in the Act or the regulations

9. INSURANCE

Local councils are required by the law to insure against liability for injury or disease to their employers arising out of their employment under the provisions of the Employers' Liability Act.