

INTRODUCTION

Employers, self-employed people and employees all have a part to play in the prevention of workplace accidents and ill health. This leaflet aims to help everyone involved in motor vehicle repair (MVR) identify the main causes of accidents and ill health in this industry and gives examples of some of the precautions you can take to prevent them.

Accidents, injuries and illness can ruin lives and businesses. For example, they can result in large amounts of sick leave by skilled mechanics and other employees, or extensive and costly damage to garage equipment and customers' vehicles. Solutions are often simple and cheap and benefit everyone in the workplace.

Following these five steps should reduce the chance that somebody, including the customer, will be harmed.

Step 1 Go through the checklist (overleaf) to see if you are taking the necessary precautions to avoid injury (the checklist can be photocopied for future assessments).

Step 2 Decide whether further action is necessary to reduce the risk of injuries and ill health.

Step 3 Carry out all necessary actions identified in Step 2, keeping a record - possibly on the completed checklist - of what has been done and whether more should be done.

Step 4 Keep your employees informed of what you are doing and how they can help.

Step 5 Add to the checklist any other health and safety issues, eg toilets and washing facilities, that you wish to monitor regularly and decide how often each of the checks should be repeated. Repeat the checks at the required intervals or after incidents or changes that could affect your original assessments.

THE MAIN CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS AND ILL HEALTH IN MVR

The MVR industry reports about 3000 injuries and cases of ill health every year. The main causes are:

Manual handling, ie the lifting, carrying, supporting or moving of heavy or bulky loads by hand or bodily force. This is the cause of about a quarter of all accidents in MVR. Use mechanical aids where possible and train employees to lift and carry loads safely.

See **Getting to grips with manual handling: A short guide for employers** Leaflet INDG143(rev1) HSE Books 2000 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1754 8)

Slips and trips: These accidents can be serious, often resulting in broken or dislocated bones and employees being absent from work for long periods. Prevention is usually simple and cheap, involving no more than good housekeeping and ensuring floors are clean and in good condition. Additional electrical sockets can reduce the number of trailing leads.

See **Preventing slips, trips and falls at work** Leaflet INDG225 HSE Books 1996 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1183 3)

Falls from a height: These are the most common cause of death or serious injury to people at work. In MVR, the main areas of concern are (a) falls from raised storage areas, moveable ladders or HGV and trailer units under repair; and (b) falls into uncovered or badly marked inspection pits.

See **Preventing slips, trips and falls at work** Leaflet INDG225 HSE Books 1996 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1183 3)

Workplace health, safety and welfare: A short guide for managers Leaflet INDG244 HSE Books 1997 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 1328 3)

An introduction to health and safety: Health and safety in small firms Leaflet INDG259 HSE Books 1997

Transport accidents: These often involve reversing vehicles, and cause the deaths of many people every year. At MVR garages, employees and members of the public are at risk

from moving vehicles as well as from vehicles falling off inspection hoists.

See **Reversing vehicles** Leaflet INDG148 HSE Books 1993 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1063 2)
Managing vehicle safety at the workplace: A short guide for employers Leaflet INDG199 HSE Books 1995 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 0982 0)

Fire and explosion: This causes most deaths and property damage in MVR, usually from the mishandling of petrol when draining fuel tanks and lines. Incidents can also occur if highly flammable vapours from cleaning solvents or spray paints are ignited.

See **Safe use of petrol in garages** Leaflet/poster INDG331 HSE Books 2000 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 1836 6)

Safe working with flammable substances Leaflet INDG227 HSE Books 1996 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1154 X)

The spraying of flammable liquids HSG178 HSE Books 1998 ISBN 0 7176 1483 2

The storage of flammable liquids in containers HSG51 (Second edition) HSE Books 1998 ISBN 0 7176 1471 9

Plant and equipment: These can cause accidents, for example as a result of (a) poorly maintained, overloaded or incorrectly positioned bottle and trolley jacks; (b) wrong pins in axle stand extensions; (c) unsafe use of props with HGV bodies and trailers; (d) chocks not used with axle stands; or (e) vehicles supported only on jacks. The unsafe use of machines such as grinding wheels, pedestal drills and compressors also causes many injuries, and vibrating hand-held power tools can damage bones and joints.

See **Using work equipment safely** Leaflet INDG229 HSE Books 1997 (single copy free or priced packs of 5 ISBN 0 7176 1326 7)

Simple guide to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Leaflet INDG290 HSE Books 1999 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 2430 7)

Simple guide to the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 Leaflet INDG291 HSE Books 1999 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 2429 3)

Power tools: How to reduce vibration health risks Leaflet INDG338 HSE Books 2001 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 2008 5)

Electrical safety: Electricity can kill or cause severe and permanent injury. Poorly maintained portable electrical equipment is a major concern in MVR, and the use of air-tools or cordless or low-voltage (110 or 50v) equipment should be considered. RCD protection for each electrical socket would also reduce the risk.

See **Electrical safety and you** Leaflet INDG231 HSE Books 1996 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1207 4)

Do you use a steam/water pressure cleaner? You could be in for a shock! Leaflet INDG68 HSE Books 1997
Maintaining portable and transportable electrical equipment HSG107 HSE Books 1994 ISBN 0 7176 0715 1

Electric shock: First aid procedures Poster HSE Books 2002 ISBN 0 7176 2264 9

Isocyanate-based paints: These are a major cause of occupational asthma (a disease that can be disabling) among coach and spray painters. All spraying of isocyanate two-pack paints should be properly managed and supervised and only carried out by trained people in enclosures or booths under effective local exhaust ventilation (LEV). Sprayers must be provided with suitable respiratory protective equipment (RPE) and be under health surveillance.

See **Isocyanates: Health hazards and precautionary measures** Guidance note EH16 HSE Books 1999 ISBN 0 7176 1701 7

Isocyanates: Health surveillance in motor vehicle repair Engineering Information Sheet EIS18 HSE Books 1997
Maintenance, examination and testing of local exhaust ventilation HSG54 (Second edition) HSE Books 1998 ISBN 0 7176 1485 9

FURTHER READING FROM HSE BOOKS

Health and safety in motor vehicle repair HSG67 1991 ISBN 0 7176 0483 7

Health and safety in tyre and exhaust fitting premises HSG62 1991 ISBN 0 7176 1686 X

Diesel engine exhaust emissions INDG286 1999 (ISBN 0 7176 1671 1 for priced packs of 15)

Safe working with vehicle air-conditioning systems INDG349 2002 (ISBN 0 7176 2278 9 for priced packs of 10)

A guide to the handling and storage of airbags and seat pretensioners at garages and motor vehicle repair workshops INDG280 1998 (ISBN 0 7176 1614 2 for priced packs of 10)

Essentials of health and safety at work 1994 ISBN 0 7176 0716 X

RIDDOR explained HSE31 (rev1) 1999

Basic advice on first aid at work Poster 2002 ISBN 0 7176 2265 7

Consulting employees on health and safety: A guide to the law INDG232 1996 (ISBN 0 7176 1615 0 for priced packs of 15)

Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969: A guide for employees and their representatives HSE39 2002

Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969: A guide for employers HSE40 2002

WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

HSE priced and free publications are available by mail order from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA. Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995
Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk (HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.)

For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 08701 545500 Fax: 02920 859260 e-mail: hseinformationservices@natbrit.com or write to HSE Information Services, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly CF83 3GG. You can also visit HSE's website: www.hse.gov.uk

This leaflet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

This leaflet is available in priced packs of 10 from HSE Books, ISBN 0 7176 2336 X. Single free copies are available from HSE Books. The leaflet is also free to download from the HSE website.

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