

# health & safety

## 1. Our Policy Statement

Our policy is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all our staff, visitors and anybody else who may be affected by our operations.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring this policy is carried out. This includes distributing at employee induction stage and enforcing the health & safety requirements in our employee handbook. In turn all employees should co-operate with their supervisors and follow the safety requirements.

Signed: Philip Stead      Date: 19-3-2009

## 2. Reporting accidents

All accidents should be reported to your supervisor who should enter the details in the accident book. Please also report disrepair (like faulty interlocks) or unsafe conditions that may cause an accident, and any near misses.

It is best to put things right before an accident occurs if possible. Any serious accidents will be investigated by our safety advisor.

## 3. First Aid

Our appointed persons for first aid provision are named on the up to date first aid signage by the first aid box and eyewash station and all employees should know who they are and where to find them. Appointed persons should ensure first aid kits are available and properly stocked with any materials they may need.

First aid is important in terms of ensuring any victim of an accident is kept as comfortable as possible and that any injury or illness is prevented from becoming worse for the victim until professional help can be obtained. Please therefore ensure you get first aid help to anyone in need. It is important, if you are the victim of illness or injury, or are helping out, that you follow the instructions of the first aider.

## 4. Health & safety risks

Our Health and Safety Booklet explains the health and safety risks and consequent safe working arrangements that are all based on the HSE's "The Printer's Guide to Health & Safety". It is designed to help you understand the risks and necessary safety controls.

The risks include:-

- Safety in operating machinery & equipment.
- Safe manual handling.
- Safety with loading, unloading and fork lift trucks
- Safe use of chemicals/substances.
- Noise.
- Fire safety.
- Electrical safety.
- Avoiding slips trips and falls.
- Visual Display Units

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## 5. Safety in operating machinery & equipment

**You must be trained and authorised to use machinery** – Whatever you use, you must have been trained by us to use it, and be authorised to use it. If you were trained at a previous company this does not matter – it will make it easier for our

supervisors to train you, but you still should not use machinery until the supervisors are satisfied you will use the machine safely and they have authorised you to use it.

**You must not underestimate the dangers machines pose** – Most modern printing machines are as dangerous as the older machines – they are however much better guarded nowadays. Please therefore respect the need to have every safety guard and safety device in place on any machines and never use a machine without these in good working order. A machine without its safety devices fully in place and working should not be used, but reported.

**Guillotine** – These machines have a capacity to cut off both your hands. They are therefore guarded by rear guards to prevent access from the back, and a light curtain to prevent hands going in at the front - breaking the light beam should stop the machine. Finally the machine cannot be operated unless you have both hands on the operating buttons to make sure you keep them off the machine!

The guards are so important that before each shift, the operator should check the light guard works using something to break the light curtain. Then apply a simple series of checks using the operating buttons. Push one button, then the other then push both, taking fingers off immediately (left, right, both) to ensure the machine will only work when both hands are on the buttons.

Record these simple tests with a tick in the Guillotine log and report any problems immediately and do not use the machine.

**Knife changing** – Dropping a heavy knife on fingers and toes can cause injury. Place the knife handles on the knife before freeing it from the guillotine or before handling a new knife into place. Only carry by the handles with a blade cover attached.

**Sheet fed lithographic machines** – In normal operation these are completely guarded and raising any of the guarding panels should activate the interlock that would turn off the machine.

Always report any fault on any interlock immediately.

During tune ups safe entry is allowed for cleaning and setting up. Do not however have a second person at the machine when working inside it.

On the older machines where inching and slow crawl of the cylinders is possible always check the inching remains at a true inch and trip nip bars are properly set on the cylinder so that when activated the cylinder does not travel far enough to draw fingers in (supervisors to keep a formal check on this)

The use of cleaning rags can draw fingers in when wrapped around the hand, always form a pad so if the rag is caught you can let go.

**Heidelberg platen press** – These old presses are adapted for platen work by removal of the inking rollers. The machines are hard to guard and so certain safety rules are essential:-

Only the trained and authorised operatives to use the press.

Other persons to stand back whilst press is in operation.

Check the flagstop daily

Always STOP the machine before setting it.

**Finishing machines** – The booklet maker is protected by interlocked guards over the mechanism. Check these work before first use each day. Stitchers, stringers, and hole drills must have the Perspex guards on and properly set and fingers kept out accordingly. Check guards formally weekly.

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## 6. Safe manual handling

Human beings suffer a lot of bad backs and often these can come about from single incidents. Some of the most serious bad backs can come about from everyday wear and tear. Bad handling technique can accelerate that wear and tear, so it's important to understand this.

You don't need to lift things to get a bad back. Bad posture sitting or standing can also lead to a bad back.

**Using equipment to handle loads** – We use a Fork Lift to present materials to the print shop and take them away. In the print shop we provide hand pallet trucks, scissor pallet trucks to lift a load, sack trolleys, trolleys, tail lift and even a jogger to square up paper piles.

Always use handling equipment where you can, and if you have an idea yourself for more equipment that would help move loads safely, please discuss this with your supervisor.

Never overload pallet trucks as they can then be hard to stop and come on to your ankles if you are pulling them behind you. Please report disrepair of any handling equipment. In good order it saves people's backs, in disrepair it can do quite the opposite, for instance jarring backs if a wheel is jammed.

**Other ways to make a difference** - Lifting through height places strains on the back as does carrying distances. Well thought out working layouts reduce the distances you need to carry things, and thinking of any arrangement which has most of the heavier handling at waist height will make a difference. Hence scissor lifts for instance can raise the stack you work from.

**Looking after your back** - At the end of the day you can't get away from having to handle items and so it's important you use techniques which reduce the strain a load puts on you to a minimum. **Lift loads when they are close to you** – Hold a load close, then hold the same load at arms length. The difference is massive, and that's the 'lever' effect as your arms act as levers against your body and the weight of the load is magnified. Always get close to what you pick up! **Keep your back straight and use your legs** – when the back is bent that acts as a lever too, against your lower back. Use your legs to get up and down not your back. When lifting goods from side to side again do this by using your legs to turn and not twisting your back when lifting.

Many people who "slip discs" never had a back pain before the injury, so you must always use safe handling techniques and never believe because you've not had much back pain that one day your back may not just "go". It can - so always take care.

If you have any back problems at work then report them to your supervisor. Our safety advisor can investigate and assist you.

## 7. Safety with loading, unloading and fork lift trucks

**Fork lift trucks** are dangerous. Serious accidents can occur as trucks can replicate road traffic accidents. They can move at speed and they are very heavy. Please ensure:-

**Keeping out of the way of trucks or pedestrians** - Trucks operate in the yard, through the curtains and up to the edge of the print shop by the stairwell. When approaching curtains drivers must sound the horn, go SLOWLY through the curtains sounding the horn again as the curtains are pierced. People on foot should take care & stand back when the horn is sounded

Drivers must give way to pedestrians, and in turn pedestrians should walk clear of trucks as they are moving and stand clear of trucks as they lift and lower loads.

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**Keeping truck speeds down** - We have fork lift trucks to load and unload, and lift and get down materials for use in our business or for sale to our customers. Fork lift trucks are not vehicles and are not for staff to get around quickly. Trucks should never be driven beyond a walking pace because they may need to stop suddenly for safety. This is especially at openings and blind corners. Very little time is saved driving trucks fast due to the short distances they have to travel.

**Reversing trucks** - Many accidents happen when a truck reverses. Always LOOK behind you when you reverse a truck. Never walk behind a truck that looks like it may be about to reverse. Stop and stand back or walk clear.

**Trained and competent drivers** - Only authorised persons trained to drive the trucks should do so. Please always check the truck daily that it is in good working order especially brakes, steering, horn, lights and signals, crucial for safety.

**Racking** – Racking should never be climbed and access to it at height if necessary should be from safety platform steps designed for this purpose, properly positioned and braked, with a second person to ensure the steps are stable and to hand the load down to.

**Carriers vehicles** – We are responsible to unload and load carriers. Carriers are responsible for load stability and opening and closing doors and curtains safely i.e. opening them as you move away from the exposed load in case anything falls.

If a load is unsafe to unload stay off the vehicle – don't try to sort it out as this can be dangerous – see supervision.

Many deliveries in and out are on transit vehicles in which we do assist with loading and unloading. Larger vehicles that carry pallets are the sole responsibility of the driver as regards load stability and going on the vehicle bed. Any problems with unloading a wagon see supervision, if it can't be unloaded safely it may have to go back.

### 8. Safety with hazardous substances

We need substances to undertake the basic processes of printing. These substances can be quite varied with a number of names, but in general they all fall into two categories.

The first is solvents which typically make inks fluid, and can dilute solvent based substances so they can be cleaned off. The second is alkalis which are used in developing and some cleaning processes.

**Solvents** - Have the ability to cause symptoms of nausea and dizziness (alcohol being a solvent) and as a solvent they can de-fat your skin and cause dermatitis – drying, red, itchy, flakey patches of skin. They are also a serious risk in fire – see fire safety. Solvents include naphtha, Butanol, Propanol, Heptane and a whole host of names which you may see on the labels. The labels will say “harmful” and “flammable”.

**Alkalis** can burn your skin. Strong ones burn instantly and sting immediately. Weak ones can burn slowly without the pain which can make them just as dangerous. Alkalis are usually based on Calcium, sodium and potassium which you may see on the labels. The labels may say “corrosive” or “irritant”

**Eyes** - Whatever is used from a bottle, a drum or a container it's important if it is hazardous your eyes are protected. Eyes are delicate and easily harmed, sometimes permanently. Use safety eyewear when you are pouring out quantities of substances, filling solvent tanks, hand cleaning anything with substances or any work where a splash to eyes is possible.

**Skin** – Wear chemical gloves or barrier creams when handling substances. The skin can get burnt, or it can contact dermatitis which is where the substance defats the skin, eventually (often on repeated exposure) leading to the skin failing to “oil” itself and then the skin can redden and flake. You must report this if it occurs. Some sensible substance rules include:-

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If you handle a liquid substance wear safety eyewear and gloves or barrier cream as a minimum.

Avoid splashes by using hand pumps to extract chemicals. If there are splashes wash them off skin and wash out splashes to clothing.

Always put caps back on containers and containers back to storage. Put caps back on empties – as there will be residues of chemical in the empty.

If you splash your eye immediately use an eyewash bottle and ask for someone to get the first aider/appointed person.

### 9. Noise

Originally safe noise levels were designated at below an average of 85 decibels. To be absolutely sure these have been reduced to 80 decibels. In printing the noise level is often below 80 decibels but can go above depending on how many machines are running. In any event if it is noisy you have a right to use hearing defenders, and these are available accordingly.

To fit them ensure hands are clean and you pull the ear upwards to open the ear canal before you press the rolled up plug inside. Hold the plug whilst it expands. Never wear hearing defenders where fork lift trucks operate.

### 10. Fire safety

Our premises are made of a lot of concrete, steelwork and cladding but it still carries a lot of flammable material inside. Fires inside a building are dangerous because there's a quick build up of dangerous smoke & fumes which has nowhere to go

The key to fire safety is to understand how fire may start and how to react. You need to appreciate the point that smoke kills most people in fires.

**How fires start** - For a fire you need material to burn like waste – so good housekeeping can reduce fire risk. Please tidy up paper waste, place solvent rags to lidded bins and have waste taken away regularly.

You need something to ignite the fire so no smoking inside the building anywhere please (it is against the law to smoke inside a workplace and that goes for vehicle cabs too), and report any faulty electrics you may come across. See electrical safety section.

**Safely escaping from fires** - Wherever you are you need to be able to walk away from a fire. Escaping past or through fires is simply not safe because it's the smoke and fumes that threaten to seriously damage your lungs, and disable or even kill you. We have a front entrance/exit, but we also have exits at the sides and rear of both buildings and two ways out of the upstairs offices front and back.

Ensure that any exit on a fire route, internal or final exit to outside are always openable from the inside when people are in the building, and that may be outside of normal working hours.

**The fire alarm** - We have a modern fire alarm system in the building with some detection that can pick up fires as they may occur and set the alarm going. In the event of you discovering a fire there are also call points strategically situated on exits from areas and on final exits. They are positioned like this so you can raise the alarm on your way out.

If the alarm is sounded then please evacuate the building. Short soundings are only tests, but if it sounds continuously then please leave the building by the nearest exit if safe to do so – or by an alternative if not! Assemble (don't drift off) on Pontefract Lane outside the frontage of our industrial estate near the back gates.

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**Fire Extinguishers** - Are only for use on small, contained fires. Water based extinguishers (water/foam) must not be used on or near electrics as the water can conduct electricity.

We have CO2 extinguishers that are safe to use on electrical items/ motors on fire, although always try to switch off or unplug any electrics on fire.

As smoke and fumes can damage you, extinguishers should not be used where the user will be exposed to such air pollutants. On the whole staff should leave fire extinguishers to those who have had some instruction in their safe use.

## 11. Electrical safety

It's important that electrics are in good order and although they are periodically checked on a formal basis it is important staff report any faults they come across like:-

Damage to plugs and cable coverings

Wires coming loose or wires taped up

Damage to casings and covers

Signs of faulty operation, overheating, scorch marks etc.

Also don't bring electrical items into the workplace from outside without management permission and being checked as safe.

## 12. Avoiding slips, trips and falls

45% of all accidents are slips, trips and falls from a height. Please keep all walkways, corridors, stairs and aisles clear of obstructions. Please wear sensible footwear at work.

Given the nature of the print shop floor we don't have too many recognisable walkways as materials come in and go out, but at all times attempt to place things out of the normal pathways you use to get around, and if YOU nearly trip over something don't ignore it, report it or move it.

In offices keep walkways clear and cover cables or route them safely where they can't be tripped over. Take care about floor coverings that wear or split and create trip hazards in themselves.

Any stepladders are for safe retrieval of stock on racking or maintenance use only. Even then all ladders need to be used safely. This means only for short term light work, where the user can have good contact with the ladder to be able to hold on, and it's securely footed by a second person.

## 13. Visual Display Units

**Using computers** – Is neither high risk or dangerous, but eyestrain can cause headaches and migraines, and sitting at VDU's all day can cause aches and pains which are easily reduced and often avoided.

**Visual comfort** – Make sure your screen is clean, adjusted on the contrast and brightness properly and not flickering (this can be adjusted too).

Then ensure you can see it OK. If you use glasses ensure the screen is the right distance so you can focus on it comfortably. If you have eye problems with reading screens we can arrange an eye test.

**Chair/Desk** – Use a proper VDU users chair and standard desk, adjusting the chair so you can sit up straight with your back against the rest and arms at 90 degrees to the keyboard. Ensure your screen is raised (screen risers can be made available to stand your screen on) so you can keep your neck straight too, rather than dipping your head down to look at the screen which can produce a pain. Also get up and move about from time to time. A rest from the same position is very valuable.

If you have any problems visual or bodily report these and the safety advisor can help.