



Safety in Hotels

Hotels, large or small, rural or city based, can be hazardous places. The following details highlight some of the hazards and risks that might exist in your hotel. They are by no means exhaustive and will vary depending on your own particular business. As a starting point use the blank sheet provided in this pack and carry out your own simple risk assessment.

Main Types of Hazard

Managing the Risk

Kitchen

Cutting injuries or amputations.

- Always cut or chop on a board, never in the hand.
- Do not leave knives in sinks.
- Store knives in suitable racks or sheaths.
- Make sure dangerous machines, such as slicers, mixers and food processors are suitably located, securely fixed and adequately guarded.

Burns and Scalds

- Do not top up deep fat fryers with oil from large containers.
- Provide suitable gloves and aprons for dishwashing and only use special oven cloths for removing hot items from ovens.
- Use long handled baskets for deep sinks.

Fire Risks

- Do not overfill or leave deep fat fryers unattended.
- Do not leave ovens and ranges unattended.
- Ensure suitable fire fighting equipment is available.

Restaurant

Tripping or falling while carrying hot food.

- Provide adequate lighting and sufficient room.
- Train staff in safe working practices eg. never carry hot food over the head of a customer, be aware of handbags etc.
- Establish a "one way" system in and out of the kitchen.

Bedrooms

Lifting furniture, bending and stretching when cleaning can lead to accidents and cause injury. Substances used for cleaning baths, toilets and floors are potentially dangerous chemicals and may cause dermatitis and chemical burns.

- Train staff in safe handling techniques eg. ensure assistance is available when lifting heavy furniture.
- Safe working practices for cleaning rooms should be developed e.g. clean the far side of the bath first to avoid having to lean over a slippery surface.
- Use the safest possible cleaning agents and instruct staff how to use chemicals.

Kegs and Gas Stores

Incorrect handling and storage of gas cylinders is dangerous.

- Handle cylinders with care and keep away from heat and direct sunlight.
- If standing upright make sure they are secured e.g. with a chain.

Unsafe stacking of kegs and cases is dangerous.

- Do not stack above normal shoulder height.



Bar

Falls, cuts from broken glass and injuries from manual handling are among the most common accidents.

- Provide mops so that spills can be cleaned up immediately.
- Provide a separate container for the safe disposal of broken glass clearly marked for safe handling.

Grounds

The main hazards are associated with traffic flow, car parking and the use of equipment and pesticides for grounds maintenance.

- Car parking spaces should be clearly indicated and located away from the main entrance and emergency exits. The speed limit for traffic should be clearly indicated and monitored.
- All outdoor electrical equipment should be supplied through a circuit protected by a 30mA RCD.
- Training on the storage and use of pesticides should be given.

Fire Safety

Electrical faults in wiring, lights and equipment, burning fat and grease, flare-ups in cooking appliances and smoking are the main causes of fires in hotels.

- Ensure that all means of escape are properly maintained and kept free from obstruction, unlocked and easy to open. Ensure that the fire alarm can be heard in all parts of the building including the stores. Ensure electrical systems are checked regularly and faults reported and repaired immediately.

Entertainment

Entertainers have been injured and even killed from electric shocks while performing.

- Ensure that all sockets used to plug in audio equipment are protected by a residual current device (RCD). RCDs are relatively inexpensive and are widely available from retail outlets selling electrical goods.

Legionnaires Disease

The bacteria which cause Legionnaires Disease live in damp warm conditions. The bacteria cause illness when they are inhaled in significant numbers. This might happen by breathing in the fine spray from a contaminated water supply from a shower.

- Ensure all shower heads are cleaned and disinfected on a quarterly basis, with additional cleaning where usage is low. Empty water storage tanks annually, leave for a period of 2 - 5 hours, disinfect and rinse.

Maintenance

People have lost their lives, others have suffered injuries as a result of accidents during maintenance work, e.g. window cleaning, watering plants, changing light bulbs, painting etc. or lift and equipment maintenance.

- Do not overlook routine cleaning and maintenance work when considering health and safety. Develop safe systems of work.

Violence to Staff

The main risk is to bar and reception staff.

- Watch staffing levels and ensure a male/female balance especially at night.
- Train staff on how to spot the warning signs of a potentially violent situation and on how to handle the situation.
- Consider the use of alarms.
- Make sure you know how your staff get home at night.

■ For Further Information:

Safety In Catering, a Guide for Supervisors and Managers - Roy Hayter, Macmillan
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