



WE PROVIDE A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT SERVICES TO ASSIST OUR CLIENTS THAT INCLUDE:

- EHS Risk Assessments
- Occupational Hygiene Surveys
- Ergonomics Surveys
- EHS Management System development and implementation
- Environmental Monitoring
- Identification of EHS Legal Requirements and Compliance Audits
- Internal Auditor Training
- General EHS Training



HW592A1000508



OH0049



DoL Approved Inspection Authority (OH0049-CI-09)

Newsletter compiled by
Lee Rands

INDUSTRIAL BATTERY CHARGING

Powered industrial trucks are used in many industries for a variety of applications and due to increasing technological advancements, battery-powered industrial trucks are becoming more and more common. With shorter recharging times, longer run times and reduced emissions (which eliminate almost all the hazards associated with carbon monoxide) this type of truck is becoming even more popular. However there are some risk involved.



Primary Risks

The charging of lead-acid batteries can be hazardous but many workers may not even be aware, since it is such a common activity in many workplaces. The two major risks are from sulphuric acid in the battery fluid as well as hydrogen gas, formed when the batteries are being charged.

The Risk of Explosion

Hydrogen gas is generated when batteries are charged and this can be explosive in certain concentrations in air. Ventilation systems can exchange an adequate amount of fresh air for the number of batteries being charged, which is essential to prevent an explosion. It is important that no flame, burning cigarette, or other source of ignition should be allowed in the area.

Why can you get a burn from acid when handling the batteries?

You can get a skin burn when handling lead-acid batteries. Sulphuric acid is the acid used in lead-acid batteries and is corrosive. Contact with the acid when pouring or handling a leaky battery can burn and destroy the skin. It is corrosive to all other body tissues e.g. the eyes, respiratory tract, or digestive system can be severely damaged if a worker gets a splash in the eyes, inhales the acid mist or accidentally ingests it. As with any corrosive chemical, proper handling procedures must be followed to prevent contact. These procedures include wearing gloves, face and eye protection, as well as aprons that are suitable for protecting employees from contact. In addition, adequate first aid facilities, eye wash stations and emergency showers are necessary to reduce the severity of accidental contacts.

Source: http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/battery-charging.html



**WISHING YOU A
HOLIDAY SEASON
THAT'S
MERRY & BRIGHT
WITH THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S LOVE!**

Safetech will be closed from 15th December 2017 - 11th January 2018

TRAINING - PUBLIC COURSES Port Elizabeth

DECEMBER 2017

4th – 6th

SHE REPS (259622 & 120333) **

FEBRUARY 2018

2nd

Fire Prevention

5th

SHE Reps (Refresher)

6th – 7th

Incident Investigation **



* HWSETA Accredited
** Unit Standard Aligned

Safetrain cc t/a Safetech is a SANAS Accredited Inspection Body, Nr. OH 0049. Refer to www.sanas.co.za for Directory Accredited Facilities, Inspection Bodies for schedule of accreditation.



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EHS Newsletter

December 2017

1 Working at Heights

Hazards associated with working at heights can originate from a lack of understanding. Employers may not know they have to provide fall protection, or the fall protection equipment may not be worn or used correctly. Employers may not have the required written fall protection procedure or process. Employers need to identify all locations where fall protection is necessary, as well as where the engineered anchor points are and train employees and regularly audit the fall protection program.



2 Poor Housekeeping

Clutter blocking passages or fire and emergency exits is a housekeeping problem. Over-stacking loads on warehouse racks may cause them to be too close to a sprinkler head, which can limit the sprinkler's efficiency in an emergency. Clutter, leaks or standing water also contribute to slips, trips and falls. If a spill requires specialized training to clean up, employees need to alert their supervisor, who can send in the appropriate staff. When it comes to storage, employers need to make sure appropriate areas are made available (often electrical rooms are being used inappropriately for storage, with supplies blocking electrical installations).

3 Electrical Extension Cords

Many electrical hazards are caused by inappropriate use of extension cords ("Daisy-chaining" – using multiple extension cords or power strips for a device). Although extension cords can be useful for temporarily supplying power for certain operations, the key word is "temporarily." Extension cords lying on the ground for long periods of time are a trip hazard. They can also be worn down by traffic, which wears down insulation and creates shock hazards. Cords that are daisy-chained may overdraw electricity from the circuits, causing the wires to heat up, which could result in a fire. Workers need to ensure they are using the correct extension cord for the job. The same applies for using a single power strip to plug in several different devices – the power strip may not be rated for the combined wattage needed for all the high-draw appliances being plugged in.

4 Forklifts

A leading cause of forklift-related hazards in the workplace is as a result of workers feeling compelled to work quickly and they begin taking shortcuts. These include driving with a load that is too heavy / large or being distracted while driving. A common approach by employers after an incident is to blame the individual and instill discipline. The forklift driver is re-trained, re-tested and then put back to work. But employers fail to identify the root cause, which is often a shortage of staff or trucks to manage the current workload. Compounding these problems is a lack of maintenance and daily checks of trucks as well as failing to separate vehicles from pedestrians.

5 Lock-Out / Tag-Out

Proper lock-out/tag-out procedures can help prevent serious injuries, but only if they are implemented and followed. Even if all lockout/tag-out steps are followed, faulty equipment can also lead to failures. Violation of lock-out/tag-out procedures often boils down to three reasons: 1. Complacency; 2. a rush to finish the work; 3. Being unfamiliar with the equipment. Employers need to train employees on lock-out/tag-out procedures.

6 Confined Spaces

Confined spaces can present a number of hazards. Many tragedies involving confined spaces have occurred because an employer didn't issue a permit, or failed to carry out a risk assessment. Workers have entered areas not knowing that these areas were confined spaces.

7 Chemicals

Chemicals can be expensive and workers in some industries never know when they might need to use a certain chemical again in the future. The result is that chemicals are stored, but may never be used again. Some chemicals can become unstable over time and it is therefore important to have control systems in place (know what the chemicals are for and why they were ordered, as well as the expiry date). Stockpiling unwanted chemicals can also be illegal and it is also very expensive to dispose of large quantities of expired chemicals.



Source : <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/14054-common-workplace-safety-hazards>