

## **Electrical Safety – Tool Box Talk**

Electricity can kill or severely injure people and cause damage to property.

However, you can take precautions when working with or near electricity and electrical equipment to significantly reduce the risk of injury to you, your workers and others around you.

The main hazards of working with electricity are:

- Electric shock and burns from contact with live parts
- Injury from exposure to arcing, fire from faulty electrical equipment or installations
- Explosion caused by unsuitable electrical apparatus or static electricity igniting flammable vapours or dusts, for example in a spray booth
- Poorly maintained equipment

In order to ensure you are working safely with electricity and appliances you must complete a risk assessment and include in that assessment:

- Who could be harmed by them
- How the level of risk has been established
- The precautions taken to control the risks

The risk assessment should take into account the type of electrical equipment used, the way in which it is used and the environment that it is used in.

The Risk Assessment must then be communicated to all staff.

### **Precautions**

All electrical installations and the electrical equipment must be suitable for its intended use and the conditions in which it's operated; you must only use equipment for its intended purpose, and only if you're fully trained.

In wet surroundings, unsuitable equipment can become live and make its surroundings live too. Fuses, circuit breakers and other devices such as RCDs (Residual Current Devices) must be correctly rated for the circuit they protect. Isolators and fuse-box cases should be kept closed and if possible locked.

Cables, plugs, sockets and fittings must meet the required standards to ensure they are robust enough and adequately protected for the working environment.

Ensure that machinery has an accessible switch or isolator to cut off the power quickly in an emergency.

Always visually inspect electrical appliances to check for damaged cable or faulty switches. If a switch trips in the fuse box caused by an electrical fault never reset the trip switch unless trained to do so. If a trip switch fails it's because it has identified a fault which needs to be fixed; you must never attempt to repair a fault unless suitably trained.

## Maintenance

Electrical equipment should be cleaned and maintained, and a record of its maintenance should be kept along with any repair or fault reports. For further information on equipment maintenance see HS0060K PUWER Equipment Safety Tool Box Talk.

Only trained and competent persons should carry out maintenance on equipment and appliances.

Electrical Appliances should have an annual test carried out by an approved contractor and records kept on site.

## Training

Only trained and competent persons should operate electrical equipment, circuit boards, breakers, RCDs and appliances; **do not use** unless you have received adequate and documented training.

If in any doubt about the use of electrical equipment or appliances contact your Manager or Supervisor.

