

Workplace Hazards in Public Services

This fact sheet is for secondary school students undertaking work experience programs, and for their host employers. It can be used as a tool to assist with task planning, and to develop appropriate induction, training and supervision to minimise any risk to students while they are 'at work'.

Students must be given instruction, and must be supervised at all times. Consideration must always be given to hazards when allocating tasks. If any risk exists, students must NOT undertake the activity.

Hazard	Possible Harmful Effects	Possible Employer Action to Prevent Injury / Illness	Preventative Action Students Can Take
Fire	Physical burn, trauma, smoke inhalation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Implement fire response and emergency procedures ◆ Provide training on use of fire protection equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Know fire response and emergency procedures ◆ Strictly comply with instructions
Vehicle traffic	Being struck by vehicles when working near roads, driveways, car parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide signs and barriers to warn and divert vehicle traffic ◆ Provide instruction and supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Work only within designated safe areas ◆ Maintain signs and barriers
Working at heights (including use of mobile plant, ladders)	Falls from heights	Students must NOT work at heights where there is any risk of a fall	Students must NOT work where there is risk of a fall
Unlevelled terrain , slippery or loose ground, embankments Fire hoses/equipment	Falls Cuts Broken bones, sprains and strains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Place appropriate safety signs ◆ Require appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including safety footwear ◆ Assess terrain and required tasks ◆ Restrict access to trip hazard areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Observe safety signs ◆ Wear PPE including safety footwear ◆ Strictly comply with instruction
Contact with public	Abuse, assault, robbery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide adequate security ◆ Provide barriers where possible ◆ Provide adequate outside lighting ◆ Control public access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Follow procedures and instructions regarding security and contact with the public ◆ Report any concerns immediately
Powered mobile plant including Pumps and generators	Operator being crushed or struck or electric shock: this could result in a fatality, or serious injury	Students must NOT operate powered mobile plant	Students must NOT operate powered mobile plant
Powered hand tools cutting equipment	Laceration, amputation, sprains and strains through poor working postures	Students must NOT operate powered hand tools	Students must NOT operate powered hand tools
Noise and overhead hazards, vibration	Hearing loss Accidental contact with electrical cable could result in electric shock or electrocution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Maintain powered tools to reduce noise and vibration ◆ Provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) ◆ Provide appropriate warning signs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wear PPE (hearing protection, hard hat) provided ◆ Observe warning signs ◆ Report any concerns
Enclosed areas (e.g. basements) with insufficient lighting and/or lack of adequate ventilation	Slips, trips and falls Breathing difficulties Collapse of structures - crushing	Students must NOT enter enclosed areas if they may be exposed to any risk	Students must NOT enter enclosed areas if they may be exposed to any risk
Manual handling (bending, reaching, stretching, pulling, lifting, repetitive motions, awkward working posture)	Musculoskeletal disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide mechanical aids ◆ Assess system of work ◆ Use team lifting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Seek help when you think a team lift is required ◆ Exercise: warm up/stretch before starting work, and cool down/stretch at end of the shift or working day
Heat, or cold/wet weather conditions	Heat rashes, heat cramps, heat stress, dehydration, loss of fine motor controls, sunburn, numbness, hypothermia, frostbite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide regular rest breaks, water, shade where practicable ◆ Wear appropriate clothing and PPE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dress appropriately for the conditions ◆ Drink water frequently in hot conditions ◆ Observe rest breaks



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Fatigue	Unsafe operation of non-powered and powered tools; likelihood of failure to follow safe working procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide equipment designed for the job, to reduce fatigue ◆ Limit work hours, provide rest breaks and rotate strenuous jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Take rest breaks when scheduled
Inadequate amenities, e.g. drinking water, toilets, washing facilities	Poor hygiene could result in illnesses, spread of infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide and maintain appropriate amenities ◆ Encourage good hygiene practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Practise good hygiene – use amenities provided
Sexual harassment, work place bullying	Emotional stress, fear and anxiety, physical illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Establish work place policy ◆ Provide staff briefings or training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Report any concerns immediately

