

## **Work Equipment Safety (PUWER)**

### **Applicable Legislation**

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)  
Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

### **Introduction**

Oxfordshire County Council uses a wide assortment of work equipment as diverse as kitchen equipment, ladders, hand held tools, overhead projectors to more complex wood and metal working machinery and the heavy plant equipment found on building sites.

### **Purpose – its aims and objectives**

To ensure that work equipment provided is suitable and safe for employees and others and is used safely.

### **Scope**

This procedure applies to all establishments and activities where work equipment is used. It will outline the key responsibilities of managers and those who use work equipment. It will not describe in any detail the individual requirements of particular work equipment. For further detailed information managers should refer to the [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. Approved Code of Practice and guidance](#) and the equipment manufacturer's instructions.

### **Definitions**

'*Work equipment*' means any machine, appliance, apparatus or tool used at work by an employee in order to carry out their assigned tasks. It includes any second-hand, leased or hired equipment as well as that which is supplied new. 'Use' has a wide definition and includes any activity involving work equipment such as starting, stopping, programming and setting equipment, repair, modification, maintenance, servicing, cleaning and transporting.

### **Manager Responsibilities**

Managers must ensure that:

- All work equipment supplied for use at work is suitable and fit for its intended purpose, is subject to pre-use visual checks and that there is a system in place for identifying and resolving defects noted before and during use.
- A systematic planned maintenance programme is in place to ensure that annual physical maintenance, inspections and testing of electrical equipment are carried out by a competent person.
- Equipment is assessed to determine what testing and maintenance schedules are required.
- Risks created by the use of work equipment are assessed and where necessary eliminated, reduced or controlled.

- Adequate training, information, instruction and supervision is provided when permitting employees/operators to work with equipment.
- All new equipment has been assessed for suitability for task and risk in use, bears an appropriate CE mark, is supplied with operating manuals and complies with relevant BS and EN standards and general health and safety requirements.

## **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees must:

- Work in accordance with safety procedures as outlined in the operating manual of the equipment together with the requirement of any risk assessment relating to the work equipment and work activity.
- Not tamper or interfere with any safety equipment or PPE provided.
- Report any faulty equipment to their manager and clearly identify the equipment as faulty whilst removing it from service.

## **Legal Requirements**

The requirements for PUWER are:

- Work equipment is suitable for its intended purpose, its intended working location and environment and is safe to use.
- Equipment is maintained in a safe and efficient state.
- Equipment is inspected where necessary for its continuous and safe use.
- Inspections and maintenance are carried out by a competent person.
- Equipment is operated by a competent person.
- Risk created by the use of the equipment is eliminated where possible or controlled.
- Adequate information, training and instructions are given to users, written where necessary.
- Sufficient lighting and ventilation is provided for the equipment.
- Dangerous and movable parts are protected with guards to prevent direct access and contact by the user.
- Protection against extremes of hot and cold temperature to prevent users from sustaining burns or scalding.
- All controls for the equipment are clearly visible and suitably marked by the manufacturer, installer or operator and their position does not put any person at risk when using them.
- Emergency stop buttons are clearly marked.
- The equipment is properly secured and stable during its use.
- Equipment has adequate warning devices where necessary.

## **Risk Assessment**

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be carried out for all work equipment and the risks identified are eliminated where possible or otherwise controlled. Control methods include:

- Use of alternative lower risk equipment.
- Suitable guards.
- Protection devices.

- Marking and warning devices.
- System control devices e.g. interlock systems, emergency stop buttons.
- Personal protective equipment.
- Safe systems of work.
- Information, instruction and training.

## Information, Instruction and Training

Managers must make arrangements for suitable **induction training** for an employee which includes the use of any work equipment involved in their job before they use any such equipment.

Any employees issued with **new** work equipment, or a **change** of task that involves different work equipment, must have appropriate training and be issued with instructions to ensure a full understanding of use, adjustment and care of the equipment.

## Appropriate Supervision

Managers will provide appropriate supervision by a competent person where any workplace activity or task involving work equipment has been identified as being in need of some specific instruction and training.

## Selecting Suppliers

Work equipment should be purchased through Council approved suppliers whenever possible. If it becomes necessary to purchase work equipment directly from other suppliers, managers must make suitable checks to ensure that the equipment will satisfy the requirements outlined in this procedure.

## Arranging Maintenance

A key aspect of providing safe work equipment for employees to use is the arrangement of suitable maintenance by a **competent person**; whether it is simple routine maintenance tasks that may be carried out daily or more extensive periodic planned preventative maintenance. Maintenance should always be carried out in accordance with \*legislative requirements, manufacturer's instructions and industry/sector best practice.

\*NB: Frequency of inspection may be determined by other legislation e.g. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) etc.

## For further information and advice:

OCC Health and Safety Team	<a href="mailto:healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk">healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>	Tel: 03300 240849
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm</a> <b>The Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998:          Approved Code of Practice and guidance</b> <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l22.pdf">http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l22.pdf</a>	

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