

SAFETY ALERT



Fire Safety On Site

Under section 43 of *WHS Regulations 2011*, employers have a duty of care to provide an effective response in an emergency and must also provide information, training and instruction to all workers in responding to an emergency. A critical part of this is dealing with fires on construction sites.

The CFMEU are conducting a campaign to achieve better standards of fire safety for all workers on site. Fire Safety is a priority everywhere, not least in lunch sheds and amenities. A thorough risk assessment should be undertaken, taking into account all foreseeable fire hazards in the workplace, those likely to be affected, firefighting equipment and emergency evacuation. The risk assessment should involve consultation workers and/or HSR's as well as the NSW Fire Services or otherwise competent person(s).

Consideration should be given to the following;

PREVENTION

- ✱ Identify **all** possible sources of ignition
- ✱ Install fire detection systems - *such as smoke detectors in all lunch rooms & amenities*
- ✱ Eliminate or substitute the use of flammable substances where possible
- ✱ Reduce or remove quantities of stored flammable substances
- ✱ Avoid build-up of combustible materials *e.g. Paper, cardboard, sawdust etc.*
- ✱ Check and maintain **all** electricals and remove - *or isolate & repair all faulty equipment/installations immediately*
- ✱ Maintain all vehicles/plant regularly
- ✱ Prohibit smoking near or around high risk tasks/areas or set up designated areas
- ✱ Review and follow advice from Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
- ✱ Perform inspections of areas **before and after** hot works take place

FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

- ✱ Ensure adequate firefighting equipment is in place - *and workers have been trained in its use*



- ✱ Ensure the correct measure is in place for the task being performed and any regulations, codes or advice from the local fire service
- ✱ Equipment must be clearly marked, free from obstructions and have instructions for use
- ✱ Equipment must be serviced regularly and maintained
- ✱ Extinguishers should be located at all exits and within **2-20 metres** of ignition sources dependant of the risk

EVACUATION

- Procedures to evacuate site must be implemented and tested regularly so that they remain effective
- Plans must take into account removing **all** workers from **all** areas of site at any time - *including injured or immobile persons*
- Emergency access routes **must** be clearly marked, have adequate back-up lighting and be kept clear of stored materials
- Clear access **must** also be maintained for emergency services
- Workers **must** be consulted with and trained in the emergency plan
- Visitors **must** be inducted into appropriate procedures
- Procedures **must** be in place for effectively accounting for all persons at the muster point

Prepared: Michael Preston CFMEU Safety Coordinator
Authorised: Brian Parker CFMEU State Secretary
Construction & General Division NSW Branch
cfmeunsw.asn.au