



SAFETY



CONVERSATION

WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN

In this safety conversation we will discuss how to prevent cut injuries that result from contact with sharp edges, such as shelving, roll cages, damaged equipment and concealed broken crockery or glass.

HOW IT WILL HELP YOU IN YOUR JOB

Following this conversation, you will:

- Understand the types of edges / surfaces that can cause injury
- Know how to avoid contact with sharp edges / surfaces
- Know what to do if you become aware of a sharp edges / surfaces

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

When thinking about cut injuries most people think of the hazards associated with knives, mandolins, blades and similar catering equipment. However, a significant proportion of injuries reported are caused by sharp edges on shelving and other equipment, and by pieces of broken crockery or glass in sinks, dishwashers or in waste. Other less obvious sharp surfaces that can cause cuts include plastic screens, cardboard and even ice.

Being aware that these types of surfaces can be sharp is the first step in preventing injuries. Edges on metal shelving or other equipment, as well as plastic edges, such as those on screens and face shields can be sharp.

By being careful when wiping these potentially sharp surfaces and protecting hands by using suitable cloths, you are less likely to bring your skin into contact with sharp edges.

You should also take care when cleaning areas where there could be hidden pieces of broken glass or crockery. This includes when cleaning inside dishwashers and glasswashers, when wiping shelves where glasses and crockery are stored etc.

Injuries are often caused where equipment, such as roll cages or trolleys are damaged, exposing sharp edges or pointed spikes. Putting equipment out of use and reporting damage is an easy and effective way of protecting colleagues from injury. There should be a process for this at your unit - do you know what it is?

Glasses and items of crockery can break while they are being washed. Be vigilant when loading and unloading the dish and glasswashers. Don't rush as this increases the chance of items being damaged. If you notice that an item is cracked or chipped discard it - either in a designated, rigid breakages bin or well wrapped in a general waste bin. If you realise that an object has broken in a sink, drain the water before removing the broken pieces.

Never handle broken crockery and glass, but use a dustpan and brush. Where this is not possible, for example when removing it from inside a dishwasher or sink, use cut resistant gloves and a wet cloth.

When disposing of empty cans, place the lid inside the can and squeeze it shut, to prevent the lid falling out.

Never push down on a full bin bag as it might contain concealed sharp objects. When removing bin bags visually inspect for sharp items that have punctured or are showing against the bag. Carry bin bags holding them away from your body.

Injuries can also occur when carrying or moving items with potentially sharp edges. Prevent injuries by wearing suitable gloves as detailed in the relevant risk assessments and safe systems of work. If in doubt, stop the task and ask.

Topic: Contact with Sharp Edges



BE MINDFUL

- Concentrate on the task when you are dealing with waste
- Be aware that metal or plastic edges can be sharp

SPEAK OUT

- Report any hidden sharp surfaces and tell your colleagues about them
- Report any damaged equipment

AVOID INJURY

- Do not remove blockages from sink drains, vacuum cleaners etc with bare hands
- Inspect crockery and glasses before and after washing it
- Use enough blue roll to act as padding when using it to clean surfaces such as shelves and screens
- Discard cracked or chipped glasses and crockery

YOUR VALIDATION

- What should you do if you notice a broken glass when emptying a glass washer?
- What are the key points to remember when emptying a full bin bag?

MORE INFORMATION

- Risk Assessments: COM06, COM09, CAT21 and CAT53
- HSE Website – Hand Protection Toolkit



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