

SAFETY ALERT!



Hygiene in the workplace

Now here is something your employees need to know! The average desk harbours 400 times more bacteria than an average toilet seat. And it's not only desktops in the office that are crawling with bacteria. According to a study by the University of Arizona, phones, water dispensing handles, microwave door handles and keyboards are the top five most germ-contaminated spots in the office. On average, any area where you rest your hand on a desk has ten million bacteria.

Background

Germs are easily spread throughout office environments. Because several people are at close quarters, colds and flu can spread quickly throughout the office. To keep healthy, observe proper hygiene in your office. The law has very specific legal requirements for sanitation (Facilities Regulations, OHS Act 85 of 1993). You must have clean, functional working facilities. To keep your facilities compliant, you must implement an ongoing hygiene programme. Your inspection must include toilets, change-rooms, kitchens and canteens.

Contributing factors

- Dirty toilet bowls, flushing mechanisms that do not work and no toilet paper available.
- Windows, walls and showers are not cleaned frequently.
- No access to sufficient clean water.
- Not all taps are in a working order.
- Old food lying around.
- Solid dishes lying around.
- Food storage facilities not cleaned.
- Inadequate hand washing facilities.

Action Required

- ✓ Clean the walls, doors and windows of all toilets and repair or repaint when necessary.
- ✓ Keep the drainage system clean. Identify and mark the cleaning eyes (the little screw cap that can be removed to enable the inside of the drainage pipes to be cleaned) so that blockages can easily be rectified. Ensure that all the equipment needed for the process is readily available.
- ✓ Clean toilet bowls and seats and make sure they're undamaged.
- ✓ Repair any items causing water wastage (overflowing ball valves, broken handles).
- ✓ Clean toilet floors and urinals and disinfect regularly.
- ✓ Clean up wash-basins and check overflow drainage, soap supply, and nail brushes for food preparation.
- ✓ Check hand drying facilities, e.g. disposable paper towels or clean towels and make sure they're always functional and available.
- ✓ Check the disposal bins are used and emptied regularly.
- ✓ Clean floors, counters, tables and chairs.
- ✓ Make sure all those using the facilities keep their eating areas clean.
- ✓ Check water dispensers and vending machines for sanitary conditions and safe positioning and operation.
- ✓ Check for leak-proof refuse bins with lids and arrange for the refuse to be removed regularly.
- ✓ Check that control methods for rodents, insects and vermin are in place.

- FREE download of Safty Awareness Posters - www.makrosafe.co.za
- FREE download of this Safety Alert - www.makrosafe.co.za
- ACCREDITED Training Provider - Forklift; Overhead Crane; First Aid; OHS Legislation
- SAVE money - Let us manage all areas of your IOD.



specials