



6 Common Safety Hazards in Colleges and How to Prevent Them

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Since 1999 MAKROSAFE has helped over 1600 clients implement and manage their Occupational Health & Safety effectively and efficiently. In this time we have become market leaders by providing clients in all industries with unmatched Health & Safety solutions. We offer clients peace of mind in knowing that we are there to help at all times.

Why We Created this Guide

Colleges are prone to many activities and situations that present a range of health and safety hazards. These hazards pose a serious risk to students, teachers and anyone else who sets foot on the premises. The risks involved with these hazards can be detrimental to the success of a college and ultimately the safety of its students.

Fortunately, there are easy ways to identify these safety hazards and put measures in place to prevent them.

In this guide we will show you six common types of safety hazards you may face in your college and give you practical tips on how to prevent them.



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Slip, Trip and Fall Hazards

Colleges face a big number of hazards related to slipping, tripping or falling. This is mainly due to incorrect or defective construction of stairs, handrails and walkways. Some of the more common reasons for these accidents are listed here.



Angled stairways or steps



Defective or missing guardrails



Defective or missing handrails



Incorrect/insufficient lighting over stairs



Loose stair treads and components (carpet fasteners, nonslip treads)



Narrow stairways



Narrow step depth



Obstructions on stairways



Slippery rugs on steps



Slippery surface steps



Tall step riser



Uneven surface step ion steps

Tips

- Improve housekeeping to remove tripping hazards/Slippery surfaces
- put up warning signage

Hazards in Canteens



If the right safety measures are not implemented in your canteen then you run the risk of facing many hazards common to the canteen area. Hazards in the canteen are increased due to the presence of food, hot liquids, steam, spills and several other elements.



Water spilled on the floor near sinks, steam tables, and dishwashers or in the freezer.



Bending over from the waist to lift cases/boxes, trash bags, or large mixer bowls.



Removing pans/pots from ovens or steamers.



Cleaning slicer or food processor blades.



Grease and/or food is spilled on the floor in food preparation and serving areas.



Reaching above chest height to retrieve boxes/cases or equipment.



Leaving boxes/cases or pallets in the aisles of the storeroom, receiving area, freezer, or cooler.



Deep fryers (very dangerous if not mounted against wall).

Tips

Slippery Surfaces

- Improve housekeeping
- redo the surface to make it more stable and less slippery
- put up warning signage

Hot Surfaces

- put up warning signage
- prevent access to that area for students

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Narrow hallways, inadequate for large groups of people.



Poorly designed hallways, with blind corners and blind doors opening into walkways.

Walkway Design

Walkways designs in Colleges could have an impact on 'traffic control'. Some colleges grow their student numbers and run the risk of having walkways which weren't initially designed with the increased foot traffic.

Tips

- Use signage to direct traffic (Keep left going up stairs, right going down. Only use this corridor to get to a specific part of the college)
- Make rules to prevent students from congregating in hallways

.4 Environmental Hazards

Environmental Hazards such as incorrect or poor lighting lead to decreased productivity and injuries.



Tips

- Improve design of classrooms by creating a way for Natural light to be used over artificial lighting
- restrict over use of PCs



Poor lighting can affect the quality of work, specifically in a situation where precision is required, and overall productivity. Poor lighting can be a health hazard - too much or too little light strains eyes and may cause eye discomfort (burning, etc.), headaches, loss of concentration.

5 Issues Caused From Non-ergonomical Seating Stations

Ergonomical Seating stations for students or lecturers that are not ergonomic.



Loss of the lordotic curve in the lumbar region – Often called the lumbar curve, this curve is where the upper body connects with the lower body.



When the body moves from a standing to a sitting position, the hips rotate causing the lumbar curve to lose its outward curve. This loss of curve is detrimental to spinal health.



Muscle Tension – When seated with poor posture the muscles in the anterior of the trunk (abdominal muscles) tend to relax. Contraction of these muscles is required to maintain a healthy curvature in the spine. Decreased activity in these muscles results in increased pressure being placed on the intervertebral discs.



Sitting without arm rests – When seated the weight of the upper body presses down into the hips. Properly adjusted armrests provide support for the weight of the arms and partial support for the weight of the upper body. Increased support of the upper body results in less pressure on the intervertebral discs.



Tips

- increase ergonomic awareness.
- identifying risk factors in the environment that are causing injury and discomfort.
- developing ways to control ergonomic hazards by modifying equipment.
- evaluating the effectiveness of the ergonomics program.

6 Ablution Hazards

Ablution hygiene hazards - such as poor cleaning programs with no daily checklists leave bathrooms dirty and unhygienic with biological hazards including bacteria, viruses etc.

Tips

- instruct students to make sure their surroundings are clean
- Make sure cleaning programs take place on a stricter schedule
- make sure cleaning products are not hazardous to health of students and employees

