

TOOLBOX TALK NO.19

Welfare Arrangements



Construction site workers need adequate toilet and washing facilities, a place to warm up and eat their food and somewhere to store clothing. Good facilities can have a positive benefit on health and wellbeing and can help prevent dermatitis and other construction related ill health problems.

Welfare requirements should be kept clean, adequately lit, ventilated as necessary and kept in good state of repair. Washing facilities must include: a supply of hot or warm water, soap or other cleansers, means of drying, separate facilities for men and women and/or facilities that can be used by one person at a time and lockable from the inside. Showers may have to be provided on some sites. Tell your supervisor if you are aware that any of the welfare facilities are being deliberately damaged or intentionally misused. Employees are as responsible as employers for maintaining welfare facilities in a reasonable condition. Leave them as you would wish to find them - do not abuse them.

There must be a supply of drinking **water**. Whenever possible, this should be directly supplied from the mains, or bottles/tanks of water. Drinking water must be provided or made available at readily accessible and suitable places. Cups are required unless the supply is in a jet from which people can drink easily.

Changing rooms and lockers

Changing rooms are needed where workers have to wear special clothing for the purposes of their work and cannot be expected to change elsewhere. The rooms must be provided with seating, means of drying and keeping clothing and personal effects secure.

Facilities for rest

Rest rooms or rest areas are required equipped with tables and seating (with backs) sufficient for the number of persons likely to use them at any one time. There should be arrangements for meals to be prepared and eaten, plus means for boiling water. In cold weather, heating should be provided.

Smoking

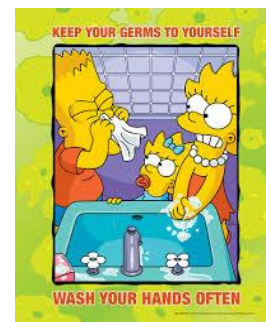
- Smoking in enclosed and substantially enclosed workplaces is now banned by different legislation in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The act of smoking in smoke-free premises is an offence
- The act of permitting smoking in smoke-free premises is also an offence
- Vehicles that are used by more than one person must be smoke-free
- Smoke free premises must have an official no smoking sign, with the approved text displayed at each entrance.

On large building or construction sites, a first-aid room, suitably staffed and equipped, should be provided.

Food safety

Food safety legislation only applies in circumstances where food is prepared, or handled, to be eaten by others. Getting food hygiene wrong, can have serious implications.

- Some larger sites may offer hot and cold food as part of welfare provisions.
- Food must be handled and stored in hygienic conditions.



- Anyone severing food must be trained and observe good hygiene procedures. Certificates of Staff Training in food hygiene and handling must be displayed.
- Where cookers/microwaves are provided for site use, ensure they are maintained in a reasonable and clean condition, and ensure all food is thoroughly cooked.
- Employees in food rooms must not smoke
- Dispose of any food waste safely – do not encourage rats or vermin.
- Always wash your hands prior to eating/drinking and using the toilet on site.
- Operatives to eat in the Canteen only and/or designated eating areas specified by the principal contractor. **No eating permitted in working areas.** Always ensure that your hands are clean before handling food, eating and smoking.

Questions: What changing facilities are available on this site?
 What are your responsibilities to welfare facilities?
 What would you do if you saw a toilet blocked or being vandalised?