



Safety in Hairdressing Premises

The following highlight some of the hazards that may exist in your premises. They are by no means exhaustive and will vary depending on your own particular business. As a starting point use the blank sheet provided in this pack and carry out your own simple risk assessment.

Main Types of Hazard

Slips, trips and falls

Most accidents occur when staff trip over trailing leads and uneven floor surfaces, or fall when trying to reach items e.g. by standing on chairs.

Managing the Risk

- Fasten cables and leads securely or re-route overhead if possible.
- Unplug all hairdryers, tongs, etc. and place in holders provided, or remove when not in use.
- Keep passageways, workstations and stairs clear. Brush up clippings regularly and clean up spillages immediately.
- Provide adequate lighting.
- Provide proper step ladders to reach anything not accessible from the ground.

Fire

Obstructed exit routes, for example by stock, can prevent escape and provide fuel for fires.

Many products used in hairdressing, particularly aerosols, are highly flammable and potentially explosive if exposed to high temperatures.

- Keep all escape routes and fire exits clear, and make regular checks to ensure this is the case.
- Store products, particularly aerosols, away from naked flames or sources of heat, at or below room temperature and in a dry atmosphere.
- Do not use portable gas heaters as they have a naked flame.
- Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances at night.

Electrical Safety

Many of the electrical appliances used in hairdressing are subjected to considerable wear and tear, in that they are continually used at different locations. Additionally they are used throughout the day in a moist environment which increases the risk of shock should a fault occur.

- Devise a system for regularly checking all portable electrical equipment, such as hairdryers, tongs, razors, etc. and for marking faulty equipment and preventing its use until repaired. (It is useful to individually number equipment).
- Keep a maintenance log for electrical equipment.
- Fit 30mA residual current devices (RCD's) to all sockets which hand held equipment is plugged into.
- Provide adequate sockets at every workstation, do not overload sockets and avoid the use of adaptors.
- Ensure all hot and cold water pipes are suitably bonded and earthed.



Hazardous Substances

Some of the hair preparations and products used in the salon contain harmful substances which can cause both skin and respiratory problems. Products used for cleaning can also be hazardous.

- Make a list of all hazardous products used in the salon and obtain hazard data sheets from the manufacturers.
- Make sure you are using the safest products available and that they comply with the Cosmetic Products (Safety) Regulations.
- Ensure you assess all new products before use.
- Store and use all products in accordance with manufacturers instructions.
- Take care when disposing of surplus/out of date stock, follow manufacturers guidance or return to manufacturer.
- If signs of dermatitis or asthma are detected suitable action should be taken to minimise the problem e.g. provide barrier creams and gloves, improve ventilation and monitor to ensure gloves etc. are used.
- Train staff in the safe use of chemicals.

Aerosols

Hairdressing products which can be packed in aerosol form include:-

- sprays, e.g. for styling
- foams, e.g. permanent wave neutralisers
- powder, e.g. shampoo

- Use only in a well ventilated area. Avoid excessive inhalation of spray. Do not spray near infra-red lamp hairdryers. Keep away from eyes. Do not permit smoking in vicinity of use. Do not warm cans to ease removal of contents. Do not tamper with the valve in case of malfunction. Provide cool dry storage conditions and train staff in the dangers presented by the use of aerosols.

Manual Handling

Lifting and moving stock and styling or cutting hair at poorly designed workstations may cause back injury or muscular strain.

- Avoid lifting items which are too heavy - use trolleys, lifts or other devices where possible.
- Train staff in proper lifting techniques.
- Design workstations to ensure staff have sufficient room to move around when cutting and styling hair and provide chairs which can be adjusted depending on the size of the client and stylist.

■ For further information:

The Official Illustrated guide to Health and Safety for Hairdressers

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