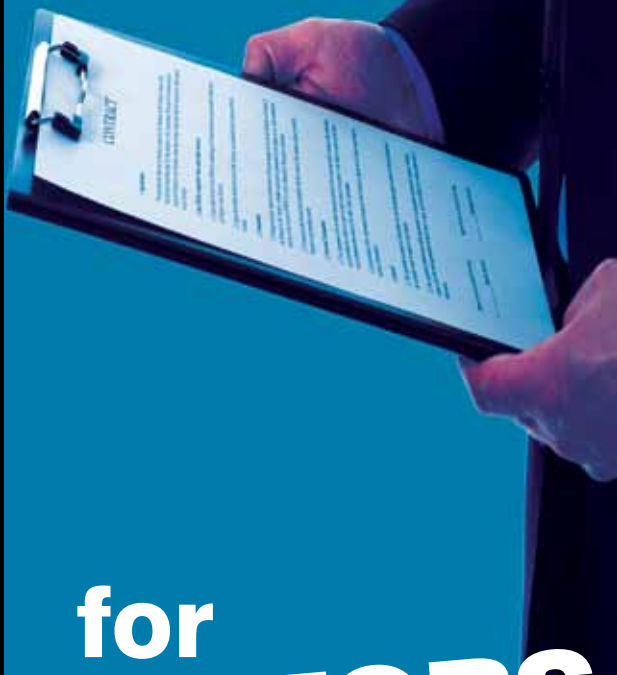


**Check out
your responsibilities**

Dangers
lurk in every workplace



**for
CONTRACTORS**

! Safe Maintenance

Saves Time >> Saves Money >> Saves Lives

hсени
CONTROLLING RISK TOGETHER

In partnership with the
26 District Councils

1

Who is a contractor?

Whether you are a small or large operator, you may need or want to use a contractor for maintenance, repairs, installation, construction, demolition and many other jobs. A contractor is anyone you get in to work for you who is not an employee.



Contractors provided a scaffold onto a fragile, unfenced roof. An operator walked onto the roof and fell to his death. The client was fined for failing to provide adequate information and supervision. The contractor was fined for failing to implement straightforward controls and safeguards.

2

Who is responsible?

Managing contractors is a joint responsibility!

As an employer the law requires that you ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health and safety of other people who come to work on your site or premises. This includes contractors who are subject to even greater hazards and risks than your own employees because they are new to or unfamiliar with your business operation.

For more information on managing contractors and templates to help you get it right visit www.hseni.gov.uk/safemaintenance

3

Basic steps to manage contractors safely

Health and safety does not start when the contractor arrives on site – it should be thought about as soon as you recognise that a job needs to be done. All parties must **co-operate** and **communicate** to ensure health and safety is properly planned and managed to avoid things going wrong in the first place.

PLAN

a) Define the jobs

Define the jobs that will require contractors to come on site. This may include routine cleaning, maintenance of machinery, servicing of alarms and other equipment or repairs following breakdown.



Remember: time and financial pressures to complete a job quickly often leads to rushing and poor systems of work that can be the root cause of accidents and ill health.

b) Identify the hazards

Identify what can cause harm to contractors, to your employees or members of the public. It is essential that you walk the job with the contractor so that hazards can be accurately identified.



c) Assess the risks

A risk assessment must be completed and both the client and contractor should be party to it.



Do a risk assessment

A self-employed electrical contractor was injured while working at a client's premises when a fork-lift truck stuck and dislodged the ladder he was working from. The client was prosecuted because no risk assessment had been made nor any steps put in place to ensure the contractor's safety. The client was found guilty and fined £9,000 plus costs.

d) Eliminate and reduce the risks

Risks should be reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

Risks can be significantly reduced if you...

... CHOOSE WISELY

Before the work starts, spell out the conditions your contractor has to meet and select the contractor best equipped to meet them. Health and Safety should be a major consideration. Frequently, companies opt to use preferred contractors – those you can rely on, with established arrangements for health and safety.

... COMMUNICATE

All parties need to consider what information should be passed between them and agree appropriate ways to make sure this is done, e.g. regular meetings or briefings.

Communicate with contractors working on site ...

Regular communication is particularly important where variations of the work are proposed or where more than one contractor or sub-contractor is engaged. Even if contractors have already been on site, take time to meet, discuss how things are going and walk the job – things may have changed.

Communicate with your employees...

However the workforce is represented, they should be part of the liaison arrangements set up by the client and should be involved from the outset e.g. through recognised trade union safety representatives or representatives elected by their employees.

Employees need to know about the activities of contractors. Inform them of the potential hazards caused by the work of contractors and the measures you have taken to reduce the risk.

Communicate with members of the public...

Where you have members of the public coming on site think about how best to make them aware of hazards and any control measures that they need to follow in order to stay safe.



A client was prosecuted for failing to provide information to a contractor working on ceiling tiles in the foyer of an occupied tower block. Unknown to the contractor, the ceiling tiles contained asbestos and were removed in an uncontrolled manner, placing the contractor and occupants at risk.

ENSURE THE WORK AREA IS SAFE

Check the work area is safe and the necessary precautions listed in your risk assessment are in place. Specifically check that power has been locked off to prevent unexpected start-ups and that measures are in place to keep people separate from the work hazards during maintenance.

ENSURE APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT IS USED

Check the equipment used is identified in your safe system of work and is in good condition. This includes any Personal or Respirable Protective Equipment.



E.g. install a permanent good quality access platform; do not disturb asbestos; use less hazardous chemicals; install safety slats over slurry tanks.

WORK AS PLANNED

It's important that Contractors are not just left to get on with the job. Their work should be monitored to ensure the job and safety arrangements are progressing as planned.

Monitor the work:

- Is the contractor working safely and as agreed? Look for competence – in safe working as well as technical ability.
- Have any incidents or problems arisen which mean you need to rethink the job?
- Are any special arrangements required e.g. due to changes in timing, out-of-hours or weekend work?

DO A FINAL CHECK



After the job is finished, review it to evaluate quality; learn what went well and what didn't so the lessons may be applied next time.

Continue to communicate with contractors during this process and remember to keep a record of your findings.

Safe Maintenance

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5

Basic Rules

- **Planning**
- **Making the work area safe**
- **Using the appropriate equipment**
- **Working as planned**
- **Final Check**

2

Maintenance Tasks

- **Corrective**
- **Preventive**

3

Key Hazards

- **Asbestos**
- **Work at Height**
- **Isolation**

Want to Know More? Additional information is available from the HSENI website www.hseni.gov.uk/safemaintenance or via the helpline number **0800 0320 121**