

GLASS AND GLAZING

(See also: [Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare\(92\)](#))

GLASS & GLAZING

INTRODUCTION

Hazards may arise from the storage, handling and processing of flat glass, from the disposal of discharge lamps and from inappropriate glazing used in the workplace. These matters are covered below.

FLAT GLASS

The use/handling of flat glass can involve the risk of serious personal injury. Precautions include the following:

Racking:

- (i) The glass should not be in contact with any substance harder than itself.
- (ii) The angle of inclination is critical and should be at least 3° from the vertical on static racks and 5° - 6° for transportable racks, pallets and stillages.
- (iii) Glass stored on its edge should be supported as evenly as possible over its surface area.
- (iv) Flooring should be of adequate strength.
- (v) Glass should be stored in dry conditions.
- (vi) Mesh fencing or other barriers should be provided at the sides of racks to contain any glass that may suddenly vent and fall out sideways during handling.

Handling:

Depending on the size and substance of the glass to be carried there are single-, double-, and multi-handed techniques. Equipment available for use might include straps or slings, suction pads (Josters), warehouse trucks and glass carriers. Suitable protective clothing should always be worn.

Processing

In addition to the general cutting hazard associated with glass, particular hazards may be encountered in the cutting of laminated glass. This may be difficult to cut because of the plastic interlayer(s). The HSE has advised that the old-fashioned practice of pouring methylated spirits into the cut and igniting it is now unacceptable and constitutes a breach of the Highly Flammable Liquids and Liquefied Petroleum Gases Regulations 1972 (Reg.15(1)). Acceptable alternatives include special purpose laminated cutting tables, vertically inclined saw frames or the use of a simple blow-lamp.

DISCHARGE LAMPS

Tubular fluorescent lamps and other discharge lamps should normally be disposed of by fragmentation followed by dispersal of

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the released chemicals with water and discharge of the effluent and debris after any necessary treatment. Hazards include flying glass, fire and combustive explosion hazards (sodium lamps only) and toxic or corrosive hazards (including lead and mercury). However, all discharge lamps should be disposed of in a safe manner either using fragmentation facilities or in accordance with the requirements of the local waste authority. (Sometimes unbroken lamps may be disposed of at a landfill site). Equally, unbroken lamps might be returnable to the supplier or manufacturer.

GLAZING IN WORKPLACES

Regulation 14 of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 requires that every window or other transparent or translucent surface in a wall, partition, door or gate should, **where necessary for reasons of health and safety**, be of a safety material or be protected against breakage, and be appropriately marked or incorporate features to make it apparent.

Assessing the risk will involve considering several factors such as the location of the glazing, the activities taking place nearby, the volume of traffic and pedestrians and any previous experience of incidents. Subsequent action may include reorganising traffic routes, the erection of suitable barriers or screens, modifying the glazing (eg use of a safety film), limiting the area of glazing or replacement with a safety material.

CHECKLIST - GLASS & GLAZING

1. Do you handle, store or process glass in your premises?
If so,
 - have you carried out a risk assessment? YES NO
 - is your racking method safe? YES NO
 - do you employ safe methods to handle glass? YES NO
 - are your methods of processing glass safe? YES NO
2. Do you provide sufficient information, instruction and training on glass-related safety for your employees? YES NO
3. Do you ensure that fluorescent tubes or discharge lamps are disposed of safely or returned to the supplier/manufacturer? YES NO
4. Have you assessed any risks from glazing in your premises? YES NO
5. Have you taken any remedial action identified in the risk assessment of glazing? YES NO

REFERENCE/FURTHER DETAILS

- *1. Booklet: Glass handling, storage and transport - Code of Practice (Issued by the Glass and Glazing Federation)
- *2. HELA Circular LAC 34/1 - Cutting of laminated glass.
www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/34-1.htm
- *3. HELA Circular LAC 34/3 - Safety at automatic glass cutting machines. www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/34-3.htm
- *5. HELA Circular LAC 34/4 -Glass handling, storage and transport. www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/34-4.htm
- **6. Leaflet IND(G) 212 L - Workplace health and safety glazing (HSE)

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- * Available to view by prior arrangement at Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Environmental Health Service, Council House, Coton Road, Nuneaton. CV11 5AA
 - ** Free copy available from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council at the above address.

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