



Safety in Petrol Filling Stations

Petrol filling stations are particularly hazardous workplaces which are required to be licensed because they store and sell a highly flammable liquid. The following details highlight some hazards, which may exist, other than those controlled by the license conditions. 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 a simple risk assessment.

Main Types of Risk

Vehicle Movement

There is considerable movement of cars and other vehicles on the forecourt which could lead to accidental collision with structures, people and other vehicles.

Managing the Risk

- Devise a safe system of traffic movement, e.g. a one-way system for entering and exiting the forecourt.
- Display clear information/warning signs setting out the traffic control arrangements.
- Provide sufficient designated parking areas close to the shop and away from the pumps.
- Provide mechanical protection to vulnerable structures such as fuel tanks and liquified petroleum gas (LPG) storage areas.

Hazardous Substances

Some items of stock and chemicals used in the car wash and for general cleaning can be harmful. Exposure to them through use, accidental spillage or leaks, can cause respiratory problems, dermatitis or chemical burns.

- Store all hazardous chemicals in their original containers.
- Obtain information on all substances stored and used in the premises from manufacturers hazard data sheets.
- Train staff and provide appropriate protective clothing.

Manual Handling

The removal of access covers to storage tanks, moving LPG cylinders and positioning of large cleaning fluid containers may cause back injury or muscular strains.

- Eliminate all unnecessary manual handling.
- Train staff in proper lifting techniques.
- Provide suitable equipment e.g. keys for lifting manhole covers.
- Avoid lifting items which are too heavy - use a trolley or castors where possible.

Slips, trips and falls

In Winter, snow and ice on the forecourt can present a risk to pedestrians from falling and from skidding vehicles. Fuel and oil spillages on the forecourt can present a slipping hazard.

- Supplies of industrial salt mixed with fine gravel should be kept and spread on the forecourt during icy conditions and also used promptly to absorb and clean up any fuel or oil spill.
- Staff should be trained on how to deal with minor fuel spillages.



Electricity

Accidents are mainly due to misuse of, or badly maintained, equipment and there is an increased risk of electric shock when using equipment externally in a wet environment e.g. commercial vacuums and car washes.

- All electrical equipment used out of doors should be suitably insulated and should be supplied through a circuit protected by a 30 mA Residual Current Device.
- All electrical switchgear controlling machinery should be clearly labelled and readily accessible at all times.
- Ensure that the electrical installation used for mechanical car washes is suitable for a wet environment and has adequate protection from mechanical damage, considering the complexity of the moving parts.
- Fit a readily accessible emergency stop button to mechanical car washes.

Fire Risks

Obstructed exits e.g. by stock and/or accumulations of packaging can prevent escape and provide fuel for fires.

- Keep all escape routes and fire exits clear and make regular checks to ensure that this is the case.
- Clear rubbish regularly (remember sand used for cleaning or containing petrol spills will be flammable and should be disposed of safely, by a hazardous waste disposal company if necessary).

Violence to Staff

Robbery of goods or cash may place staff at risk of violence.

- Consider the use of closed circuit television, panic alarms and other security measures e.g. the use of pay windows at night.

Compressed Air Systems

The main risks arise from abuse of this equipment and from over inflation of vehicle tyres.

- Make sure that the air system is located within sight of the shop attendant to ensure constant supervision.
- Display clear information on the use of the air system e.g. the driver should check the correct tyre pressures.
- Train staff in the safe use of the equipment.

■ For Further Information:

Dispensing Petrol

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