

Hazard Analysis

Your workshop will contain a large number of Hazards. The trick is to locate and remove them to prevent harm. Often it is difficult to pinpoint hazards because we are so familiar with our surroundings that we don't notice that there is a problem. Often a hazard will present itself upon a visitor to the workplace, they are not used to hopping over holes, ducking under a power leads or watching out for airlines. So based on this advice lets see if we can make our workshops a little safer.

First Aid Kit – you need a well-stocked and updated first aid kit. In it you need all the standard items and you might like to include: a splinter probe, saline eyewash, a battle bandage for bad cuts and an extra supply of band-aids. Safety shops and Chemists are able to offer good advice here.

Emergency Equipment – Have at least one fire extinguisher in a very accessible place in your workshop.

Emergency numbers – On the wall near the phone it's a good idea to list the emergency numbers. Rip the front page from the old phonebook. Also list your doctor, the local Police station (for break-ins) your neighbors (both sides) and close family. In the event of an emergency you will never remember these.

Telephone – If you don't have a telephone wired into your shed' invest in a walkie phone or a cell phone and take it with you when you go into the shed.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Eyes, Ears, Lungs & Body

Eye protection in the form of safety glasses, goggles or face-shield should be worn at all times when there is a risk of flying woodchips or metal partials.

Ear protection is necessary for prolonged noise exceeding 85 decibels.

Lung protection is paramount for most woodworking applications especially sanding. Protect the body with a cover-all and the hands with gloves.

Walkways - Can you walk easily from the bench to the woodworking machinery and out to all the doors? Could you do this in the advent of an emergency like fire or in the total darkness of a power cut at night? If not then you need to sort out some safe walkways. (Think tripping hazards maybe)

Manufacturer's Warnings – The woodworker's workshop is usually full of power tools and machinery. All machinery comes with a users guide, safety features, warnings and stickers pointing out the risks. Use these as a guide to note your machine hazards.



Electrical Hazards – Electricity can kill in seconds and some of our machines are older than our children. Most modern machines are 2-pin and double insulated, however if you cut the cord they are electric chairs to punish to foolish. Have all your appliances checked regularly by a qualified electrician, use an isolating transformer or RCD for all electrical equipment or better still have your shed hard wired to a RCD that controls to every electrical plug.

Shelves and storage areas – In many sheds, storage areas are a death trap. Unevenly stacked equipment, tripping hazards on the floor, heavy items up high, unstable and loose materials balanced on top of others waiting for a nudge to fall. Spend some time in you storage areas and stack and box them correctly and neatly.

Tools and Equipment – The best place for unused tools and equipment is on a shadow-board. You know what you have got and you know what is missing. All the professionals have shadow-boards follow their lead.

Hazardous materials – Store all flammables in a flameproof cabinet. Wood-workers collect a number of flammable and caustic substances to rub on their wood. Collect them all into one place near the door, buy or construct a metal cabinet (lockable if you have youngsters) and store them all in it.

