



# **NAW HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

## **Introduction**

The NAW has a responsibility to assist its members to keep themselves safe while pursuing woodworking and to provide a set of minimum safety information that will ensure their own safety and the safety of others.

## **Aim**

To establish a viable Health and Safety Guidelines that promote safe working habits for those engaged in the practice of woodworking:

- Foster positive Health and Safety practices,
- Identify common hazards and discuss best methods for them to be dealt with,
- Consult with ACC, Department of Labour and other Health and Safety stake holders,
- Promulgate widely the results to the NAW membership,
- Establish a system for member participation in ongoing updates,
- Establish an accident register to assist to locate hazards, and
- Encourage the establishment of Health and Safety Officers within Clubs who will be responsible for the safety and well-being of club members during club activities.

## **Background**

There are many woodworkers within New Zealand who engage in woodworking as a hobby. This is mostly done in isolation, away from those who could render assistance in an emergency. A proportion of NAW members have no formal training for the equipment they use and often come from backgrounds that have not been exposed to the safety training of the trades. This policy document, and the associated documents, are to provide guidelines and standards that should be observed when working with moving machinery.

## **SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK**

### **Introduction**

Safe systems of work are those that, when observed, keep the woodworker safe from harm. To enable the safe systems to be effective it is important that the user has eliminated, isolated or minimized all the hazards associated with the job and the surroundings. Along with this it is important that the user is familiar with and uses personal protective equipment (PPE) that will minimise the likely effects of a hazard to the user.

### **Hazards**

A hazard is defined as anything that will harm a woodworker or anyone else, whether they are participants, observers, or passers-by. Harm as defined by OSH is too broad to outline here, but in short it relates to injury from something as little as a cut needing a sticking plaster to something you need to go to the doctor for. Serious Harm is what ACC & OSH are concerned with – this is where there is a permanent loss of bodily function or even death as a result of exposure to a hazard. This could be: loss of a finger or eye or amputation and would probably result in hospitalization and a long period of recuperation.

### **Hazard Identification**

OSH investigations of work injuries indicate that many could have been prevented if the hazards had been identified and eliminated before work had begun. The whole essence of being safe involves identifying all the hazards in the workplace and then making sure that

they cannot cause harm to you or others. Most woodworking hazards fit into a common list and have already been identified by others. Attached is a list of the hazards identified at woodworking locations.

## **IDENTIFYING AND DEALING WITH HAZARDS**

1. Identify the hazards
2. Prioritise the hazards
3. Control the hazards
4. Dealing with accidents

### **1: Identifying the Hazards**

OSH recommends four methods for identifying these that are:

- By Area
- By task
- By process
- By Environment

#### **By Area**

Involves having a plan of the area/workplace that can be divided into zones so the different hazards can be listed, these are:

- What might cause harm,
- What energy sources are present,
- What machines are used,
- What chemicals are used, and
- What physical conditions exist, e.g. noise, heat, height, etc.

#### **By Task**

This process involves describing all the actions that make up a task, in order, then analyse each step to identify all the hazards that are present and include:

- What you do and how you do it,
- The equipment you use and how you use it, and
- All the substances that are used – either solids, liquids or gases.

#### **By Process**

Prepare a flow chart of the processes used and identify:

- Raw materials used,
- By products produced,
- Waste products,
- Finished product,
- Air contaminants,
- Physical hazards,
- Ergonomic hazards, and
- All hazardous substances.

## By Environment

Does the environment in which the process is carried out have any of the following that may be hazards?

Heat	Wind	Heights	Confined space	Unstable stacks
Cold	Radiation	Dust	Fumes	Heavy Lifting
Noise	Light or Lack of	Ground Surfaces	Clutter etc.	

Every workplace is different and careful consideration is needed to determine which method is best to use for identifying your hazards. OSH produces a number of codes of practice and use guidelines for machinery and processes, and reading these can help identify your hazards. There are helpful lists of common hazards produced by industry, unions, machinery and tool manufacturers and individual companies. Perusing these lists and understanding the hazards is easier than identifying the hazards by yourself. Whichever method you use, it is paramount that you identify all your hazards and do something about them before they cause serious harm. The document 'Hazards summary for NAW' identifies many hazards. It is very important that each club amends this document for their particular equipment set and location.

## 2: Control the Hazards

Once the hazard has been identified it needs to be investigated to understand its needs. There are three ways of dealing with the hazard:

- a. **Eliminate** – Remove the hazard from causing harm, e.g. faulty wiring once repaired is no longer a hazard. Installing a residual current device (RCD) in the power system will identify when a dangerous electrical fault exists and cut the power flow and no electrocution problems will occur. This is elimination.
- b. **Isolate** – There are some cases where a hazard cannot be eliminated in these cases you look to isolate it so it can't cause harm. An example of this is where a saw has a guard placed around it. The saw blade cannot be removed so guarding is used to protect the user.
- c. **Minimise** – If it is not practical to eliminate or isolate a hazard we must look to minimising the effects to the user. Minimising hazards in most cases involves using personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect the user from the hazard. The woodworking environment is ripe with hazards of this nature including: dust, chemicals, noise, revolving machinery and flying particles, to name a few. With dust, a mask or respirator is needed, with chemicals gloves, a coverall and respirator, with noise ear plugs are best so as not to interfere with eye and lung protection already being used, revolving machinery needs hair restraint and a snug fitting coverall over loose clothing and flying wood-shavings means eye and face protection that a face shield is best suited.

## 3: Recognise New Hazards

Clubs and woodworking events outside clubrooms need to have a place for members and participants to report and record new hazards that they recognise. The club or event H&S officer needs to check these new hazards and look for new hazards frequently. Then work with the committee or organiser to identify and control these new hazards.

## 4: Awareness of Hazards

Every club member, every event participant, and every visitor to a club or event, including those considered to be "just looking", needs to be aware of the hazards and acknowledge that information. To this end they should read and understand the information listed in the

Hazards Identified list (amended as needed to recognise a club, or an event, equipment and location). Every person should then read, understand, and sign the Health and Safety Declaration form for that location.

### **5: Dealing with Accidents**

In a workplace or factory this is very easy, accidents are all reported and investigated and controls are put in place to prevent them from recurring. In our case we are mostly lone woodworkers with no accident register to record our injuries, no hazard register to list our hazards and no health and safety manual to gain guidance from to avoid, or in case of, mishaps.

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION ACCIDENT REGISTER**

The National Association will be pro-active in the area of accidents and collect reports of injuries. It will also list prevention measures or assist with suggestions for those who need help. The NAW Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for the collation of injuries to woodworkers and report to the members with quarterly and yearly statistics indicating the areas of concern and the control measures used or needed. With this information at hand other woodworkers can be made aware of the dangers of woodworking and take precautions so they don't become another statistic.

The accident register will be located with the National Association H&S officer but will require input from the membership. An appeal to the membership to report accidents will be lodged frequently in Creative Wood with a destination email address and the website will have an area where members can record the same information. The Secretary of the NAW will also receive postal lists on the behalf of the H&S Officer.

### **EDUCATION**

NAW has a responsibility to ensure all its members have a knowledge of the Personal Safety requirements needed while engaging in woodwork activities.