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Posted by Anonymous on Tue, 2015-01-20 18:58

Photocopier / printer stored outside chemical store room: Hi I have just come back off holidays to find a large photocopying machine placed opposite the door to my Chemical Store room—within a metre. This photocopier / printer is for all staff to use. Are there any regulations stating this is not permitted? I dont feel comfortable having the machine in its present position, but I have been told there is nothing to worry about.

Voting:



No votes yet

Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

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Answer by go_support on question Answer by go_support on question Answer by labsupport on question Answer by labsupport on question Answer by labsupport on question photocopier / printer stored outside chemical store room

Submitted by sat on 28 January 2015

There are no regulations as such stating exactly where photocopiers should or should not be

located. However, Science ASSIST recommends that a site-specific risk assessment be conducted and consideration be given to relocating the photocopier. This would take into account the emissions from the copier, the ventilation in the area, as well as providing sufficient workspace to operate the machine and access other areas, such as the chemical store room.

Hazardous chemicals are stored in a chemical store, so careful consideration needs to be given for access to the store as well as the need to safely transport hazardous chemicals into and out of the store. At the same time, the activities surrounding the photocopying machine need to be considered. There will often be people standing at the photocopier or bending down to refill paper or clear jams. This could pose a major problem for anybody entering or leaving the chemical storeroom carrying what could be a hazardous substance or dangerous good. Storage of paper for the photocopier may also be an issue. The following links may be helpful:

Photocopiers

General information about photocopiers can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents...>

This publication notes potential hazards and provides guidelines for controlling these hazards. **It contains a useful checklist on page 10.**

Workspaces:

Workplace Health and Safety legislation contains requirements for workplaces to have sufficient space for work to be carried out safely.

The Code of Practice for managing the work environment and facilities states:

“2.3 Work areas

The layout of work areas should be designed to provide sufficient clear space between furniture, fixtures and fittings so that workers can move about freely without strain or injury and also evacuate quickly in case of an emergency. Space for aisles, passages and access to other areas is needed in addition to the space around workstations.

In determining how much space is needed, the following should be considered:

- the physical actions needed to perform the task
- the need to move around while working
- whether the task is to be performed from a sitting or standing position
- access to workstations
- the equipment to be handled and the personal protective equipment that may be worn to perform the work.

Environmental factors including heat or noise may require an increase to the

space, as will work activities that involve manual tasks or the use of tools such as knives where the risk of injury is increased due to close working conditions.”^[i]

The Code of Practice for Hazardous Manual Tasks states in section 4.3

“WORK SPACE

Work areas should have enough space to accommodate the number of workers and other people involved in the task, any equipment that might be required and space to operate the equipment safely.”^[ii]

States that have not adopted the WHS legislation have legislation with similar intent for sufficient space for workspaces, access and egress. See:

- http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/atoms/files/code_first_aid_0.pdf; this has information regarding Workspaces (p14)
- <http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/strategies-and-solutions-office-safety>; this has some helpful information with recommendations for the storage of the copy paper.
- http://www.vwa.vic.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0004/9229/Workplace_amenities_CC.pdf ; this details requirements for workspaces and access ways. (pp 22–23)

Australian Standards for Laboratories

Guidance for access to a chemical store should be taken from the following Australian Standards:

AS/NZS 22.43.10:2004 Safety in Laboratories—Storage of chemicals:

“5.5.2.4 Access

Sufficient aisle space shall be provided for movement of personnel and mechanical handling units that may be used to handle the packages.”^[iii]

AS/NZS 2982:2010 Laboratory design and construction

“2.10 Aisles

The minimum width of working spaces between benches or floor-positioned equipment shall be as follows

(b) Workers on one side of aisle plus through traffic.....1200mm

(d) Workers on both sides of aisle, plus through traffic1800mm

2.11 Egress and Access

Corridor and door widths shall be large enough to allow routine transfer of laboratory equipment.”^[iv]

[i] Safe Work Australia. 2011. The Code of Practice for managing the work environment and facilities. <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/...> CC BY NC 3.0 AU <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/au/>

[ii] Safe Work Australia. 2016. Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice. <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/...> CC BY NC 3.0 AU <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/au/>

[iii] These extracts are from AS/NZS 2243.10:2004 Safety in laboratories Part 10: ‘Storage of chemicals’ reproduced with permission from SAI Global Ltd under Licence 1407-c117

[iv] These extracts are from AS/NZS 2982:2010 Laboratory design and construction reproduced with permission from SAI Global Ltd under Licence 1407-c117

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