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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 don't feel comfortable having the machine in its present position, but I have been told there is nothing to worry about.

Voting:



No votes yet

Year Level:

7

8

9

10

Senior Secondary

Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

Showing 1-1 of 1 Responses

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

Submitted by on 28 January 2015

Answer reviewed 23 February 2023

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 excerpts from Codes of Practice and Australian Standards may be helpful:

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:

“2.2 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.”¹

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.”²

Australian Standards for Laboratories

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

AS/NZS 2243.2:2021 Safety in Laboratories—Storage of chemicals

“8.5.2.4 Access

Sufficient aisle space shall be provided for movement of personnel and mechanical handling units that may be used to handle the packages.”³

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.”⁴

References

1 Safe Work Australia. 2018. *Model Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities* Retrieved from the Safe Work Australia website: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-code-practice-managing-wo...>

2 Safe Work Australia. 2018. *Model Code of Practice: Hazardous Manual Tasks*, Retrieved from the Safe Work Australia website: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-code-practice-hazardous-m...>

3 Standards Australia. (2021). *AS 2243:2 2022, Safety in Laboratories, Part 3: Chemical aspects and storage*. Sydney, Australia. This excerpt has been reproduced by ASTA with the permission of Standards Australia Limited under licence CLF1222asta. Copyright in AS 2243:2 2022, *Safety in Laboratories, Chemical aspects and storage* vests in Standards Australia. Users must not copy or reuse this work without the permission of Standards Australia or the copyright owner.

4 Standards Australia. (2010). *AS/NZS 2982.2010 Laboratory design and construction*. Sydney, Australia. This excerpt has been reproduced by ASTA with the permission of Standards Australia Limited under licence CLF1222asta. Copyright in *AS/NZS 2982.2010 Laboratory design and construction* vests in Standards Australia [and Standards New Zealand]. Users must not copy or reuse this work without the permission of Standards Australia or the copyright owner.

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<https://assist.asta.edu.au/resource/4175/guidelines-design-and-planning-...>

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