

# Occupational Health and Safety in shopping centres



**labour**

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Department:  
Labour  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

A cartoon illustration of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a yellow cardigan over a blue and white striped shirt and blue trousers. She is pushing a white shopping cart filled with various items like a yellow bag, a red bag, and a blue bag. The cart has a blue label on the side.

## **What is health and safety all about?**

It is about preventing people from being harmed at work or becoming ill by taking the right precautions and providing a satisfactory working environment.

## **Does health and safety apply to shopping centres?**

Yes! It applies to all businesses, also to the self-employed and all workers.

## **What are the chances of slips and trips in a shopping centre?**

Slips include the following:

- wet or oily surfaces
- occasional spills
- weather hazards
- loose rugs or mats that are not anchored
- flooring or other walking surfaces that do not have the same degree of traction in all areas.

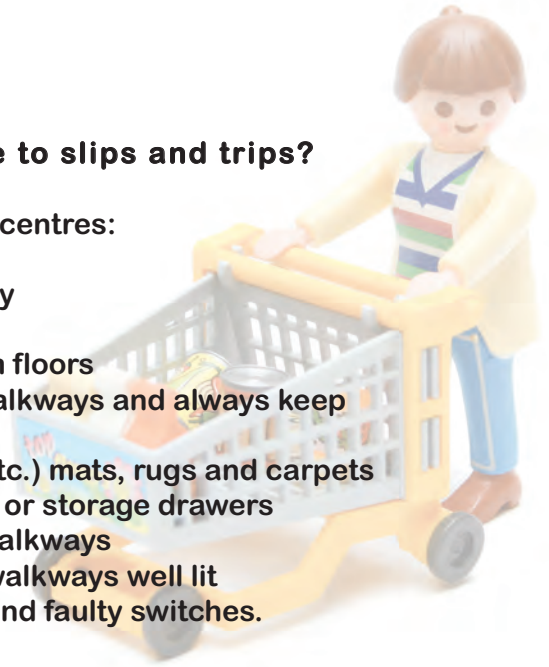
Trips include the following:

- obstructed view
- poor lighting
- clutter in your way
- wrinkled carpeting
- uncovered cables
- bottom drawers not being closed
- uneven walking surfaces (steps, thresholds).

## How to prevent falls due to slips and trips?

Housekeeping by shopping centres:

- clean all spills immediately
- mark spills and wet areas
- mop or sweep debris from floors
- remove obstacles from walkways and always keep them free of clutter
- secure (tacking, taping, etc.) mats, rugs and carpets
- always close file cabinets or storage drawers
- cover cables that cross walkways
- keep working areas and walkways well lit
- replace used light bulbs and faulty switches.



## Eating areas

How clean are the eating areas?

### Eating areas - storage and consumption

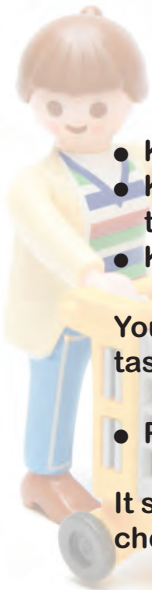
The employer must ensure that an area suitable for the storage and consumption of food is provided.

The restaurant owner must ensure that all consumables are kept in a clean place to ensure that food stored or consumed at shopping centres does not become unwholesome because of the surrounding shops.

Food storage must be restricted to the prescribed areas.

What information should one have as a worker in a restaurant?

- You should know how to report all injuries and how to do this
- Know where and how to get first aid



- Know to report all hazards and shown how to do this
- Know your right to refuse unsafe work and procedures that may be harmful to yourself
- Know how to safely use and clean equipment.

You should be shown how to safely perform specific tasks:

- Proper lifting techniques.

It should be explained to you how to read labels on chemicals.

You should be told about the right to know information about hazardous materials:

- Location of material safety data sheets (MSDS) and how to read them
- How to read labels
- How to clean up spills.

You should be told which personal protective equipment is required for various duties (and shown location):

- Gloves.

Emergency procedures should be explained to you and shown where documents are kept.

## **How safe are lifts in a shopping centre?**

### **Lifts**

#### **Inspection and testing**

An automotive lift must be inspected and tested frequently.

## **Records**

The employer must keep a maintenance, inspection, modification and repair record for each automotive lift.

## **Operation**

Operation, inspection, repair, maintenance and modification of a LIFT must be carried out according to the manufacturer's instructions or the written instructions of a professional engineer.

## **What do inspectors look for when inspecting a shopping centre?**

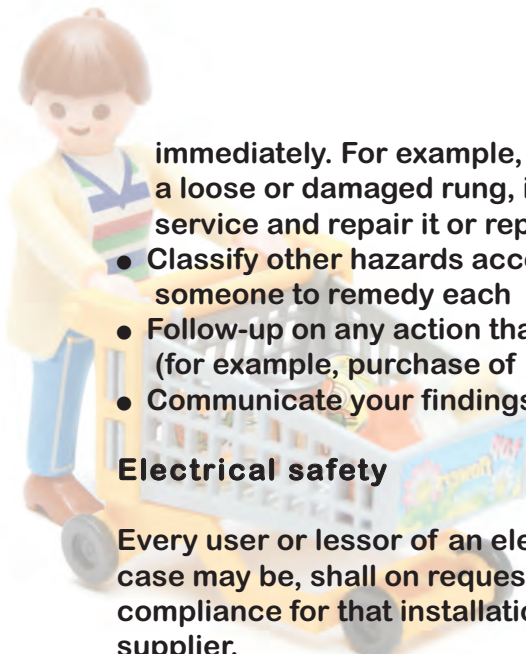
- Improper storage of materials, for example, in front of emergency exits or electrical panels, or blocking aisles or stairs
- Accumulation of liquid or grease on floors
- Failure to put a sign or barrier near wet floors
- Dull knives
- Lack of guarding on mixers and other equipment
- Lack of visibility through swing doors
- Poor maintenance of dollies, carts, etc.

Check whether safe work procedures are being followed. For example:

- Is the meat slicer unplugged while being cleaned?
- Are gloves being used for handling garbage?
- Are proper lifting procedures being used?
- Do workers know the procedures for working alone?

## **After the inspection, they TAKE action!**

- Remedy serious hazards or unsafe work practices



immediately. For example, if you find that a ladder has a loose or damaged rung, immediately remove it from service and repair it or replace it with a new ladder

- Classify other hazards according to priority and assign someone to remedy each
- Follow-up on any action that will need time to complete (for example, purchase of new equipment)
- Communicate your findings to the workers.

### **Electrical safety**

Every user or lessor of an electrical installation, as the case may be, shall on request produce the certificate of compliance for that installation to an inspector or the supplier.

For more information contact your nearest office of the Department of Labour:

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