



**Risk Assessment:
Industrial/Commercial Cleaning
Machines**

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1 Introduction

These guidance notes are not intended to be definitive; they are intended as a guide as every location and application is different.

YOU need to think through the hazards and controls required that are specific to your business activity

2 Risk Assessment: General Considerations

- Pay attention to the environment in which the cleaning machine is to be used.
Are there stairs, lifts, uneven flooring etc..
If lifts are present, can they be locked out of use before any cleaning is commenced?
If stairs are to be cleaned, can the cleaning machines be 'parked' safely so that there is no hazard arising from them toppling down the stairs.
- Is the cleaning equipment suitable for the intended use?
- Is the equipment safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and, where appropriate, routinely inspected so that this remains the case with recordable checks.
- Is the correct PPE available for the cleaning tasks identified e.g. gloves, safety footwear, goggles, clothing etc.
- Consideration needs to be given if there is likelihood that an operator may have a disability that requires special attention.
- Manufacturers instructions for correct operation of equipment should be fully understood by all operators before use.
- It will be useful to refer to HSE Risk Assessment Guidelines.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/cleaning/index.htm>
and for reference to guidance on Health and Safety for disabled people and their employers:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/disability/index.htm>
- check that easy access is available for all equipment likely to be used.
- that continuous flooring, free of hazards is available
- if equipment is likely to be transferred from one floor to another, that it is within the capability of the machine operators and/or suitable provision for such transfer is to hand
- that suitable provision is available for disposal of waste material arising from the use of equipment.

3 Mains Electric Powered Machines

Check that:

- The power supply matches the electrical rating of the machines to be used (voltage/amperage).
- The electrical power sockets should be undamaged.
- The power supply plug should be undamaged and the electrical lead from the plug should be securely fixed to the plug.

- The electrical cable should be undamaged and free from serious abrasions and cuts, be aware that the cable may be a trip hazard to others and steps should be taken to minimize this hazard.
- The cable should not be used to lift or move the machine.
- The machine should have its on/off control switch in good working order and be undamaged.
- The electrical cable is long enough for all tasks to be performed by the machine.
- If an extension lead is necessary, that it is rated to match the power demands of the machine and is capable of being used without introducing secondary hazards, extension cables should be fully unwound before use.

4 Battery Powered Machines

Check that:

- A well ventilated and dedicated area is provided for recharging of the battery.
- Clearly presented site evacuation procedures are displayed.
- That personal protection equipment is provided for any work that may be necessary associated with the batteries.
- Eye wash facilities are to hand in the event of any acidic splash.
- The electrical supply to any charging equipment is safe and in good order.
- The charging units are secure and mounted in a suitable environment
- Clear instructions upon the charging of the batteries and their maintenance is to hand.
- Adequate lifting resources are available relative to the weight of battery, where the battery has a likelihood of being frequently moved off a machine.
- The battery powered machine can be securely parked whilst under charge.

5 Vacuum Cleaners

- Identify that the vacuum cleaners available are of the correct type for the cleaning task.
- Check that the correct accessories available to safely fulfil the cleaning task.
- If there is any likelihood of hazardous dust being encountered, check that the correct vacuum cleaner specification is being used and that disposal of dust bags is secure.
- Is the weight of the vacuum cleaner, when full, likely to create a handling problem that will need addressing?

6 Pressure Washers

- Is the machine protected by an RCD device, if not such devices should be made available for use by the operators.
- The operator must be given basic training in the safe operation of the machine.
- Ensure that the electrical power supply is adequately protected or suitably located to avoid ingress of water
- Check that the appropriate PPE is available for the operator
- Ensure that the surface being cleaned will not be damaged through normal

- operation of the pressure washer
- Ensure that the operator is protected from any surface debris that may arise when the pressure jet is applied.
 - Water run off should be to a foul water drain not to a surface water drain.
 - Extension high pressure hoses are to be preferred to electrical extension cables, these should be available to the operator where the task is appropriate.

7 Single Disc Machines

- The operator should be suitably trained in the use of the equipment
- Personal Protection Equipment should be available.
- Manual handling techniques appropriate to the machine being used, should be pointed Out to the operator before work commences.
- Operators should be trained and proven competent in the safe removal and fitting of brush or disc drives associated with this type of product group
- To minimize the likelihood of injury to the operator, they must be made fully aware of the handle height adjustments to ensure comfort when operating the machine.

8 Pedestrian Walk-Behind and Ride-On Machines

- Walk the site area to be cleaned with this type of machine, to ensure that the surface being cleaned is continuous without risk of the machine falling from an elevated section onto a lower level surface.
- Where this type of machine is being used and where other personnel are present a visible/audible warning device should be fitted to the machine.
- Before any cleaning operation is undertaken the operator must be proven to be competent in controlling the machine
- Personal Protection Equipment must be available where appropriate.
- If mechanical tipping devices are integral to the machine, the operator must be fully trained in safe disposal of waste procedures.

9 Footnote

It is recommended that reference is made to the full range of ICMMA Technical Papers that appear at <http://www.icmma.org.uk/> on the 'Technical Papers' page.

These will provide further information upon a range of Commercial/Industrial machine types.