

Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments – Why they are needed and how Gas Safe can help

Over recent years, Risk Assessments have become a statutory requirement for employers ***under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999***.

General Risk Assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of the hazards present in your company's ***working environments*** that could cause harm – either to members of your workforce or to the general public.

With respect to specialised areas, such as the use of gas cylinders and cryogenic liquids, a problem may exist in that, if individuals who are undertaking the Risk Assessment don't fully appreciate the hazards that exist with certain commodities or processes, then ***these*** hazards may be overlooked or not identified at all.

Once hazards have been identified, the risks they pose need to be evaluated. This process will determine if the precautions you have already undertaken are sufficient, or whether more should be done to prevent the hazards from causing injury or ill health.

Hazard and Risk – What are they?

Hazard - means something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. hazardous substances, methods of working, equipment used, incorrect storage or handling techniques and so on).

Risk - is the term used to describe the seriousness of the hazard and the potential for the harm to be realised.

For example, how likely is it that moving an oxy-acetylene workstation ***across the workshop floor will result in an accident and an employee being injured?*** If that happens, how serious are the consequences likely to be?

At Gas Safe, we rate risk as the likelihood that a hazard will cause harm, multiplied by the severity of that harm, were it to occur.

In order to make a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment of the general risks to health and safety, you must carefully consider the activities of all members of the workforce while they are ***at their usual place of work***.

In addition, when assessing how serious the consequences would be, you need to take into account not only your employees but also anyone else who may be affected by the activities. (This is particularly relevant to gases in the event of a fire involving cylinders or other pressure vessels where contractors, neighbours or members of the emergency services or public may be affected).



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The Assessment – What do you need to do?

- Identify the hazards
- Identify and evaluate the significant risks that arise from your company's activities
- Formulate and prioritise **control** and protective measures that need to be undertaken to reduce the identified risks
- Concentrate on the hazards and risks that **have the potential for severe consequences and are a constant** feature of your operational activities.

The outcome of the assessment should be a series of findings that can be used **to reduce the risks by changing** work practices, introduce medium and long-term controls and identify training needs.

Recording

The findings of your assessment must be documented and identify any groups of people who may be at risk. In addition you must inform the people affected by the Risk Assessment of the findings.

Reviews

You need to plan a review of your Risk Assessments after a fixed period of time (2 years is recommended). However it should be noted that some hazards may need to be reviewed more frequently than others. The review period depends on:

- The type of hazard and the seriousness of the risk
- Whether there have been any accidents, near misses or equipment defects/problems
- The degree of change that may be taking place within the company

Your Risk Assessment document needs to be amended if a hazard or risk is no longer valid, or if there has been a significant change in your operations.

Consultation

Risk Assessments need to be practical and undertaken with care.

It is important to use the knowledge and expertise of those people within your organisation who are best placed to have a practical understanding of the risks arising from those activities that are undertaken.

In most cases, general Risk Assessments can be undertaken in-house, but where complicated or highly technical hazards and risks need to be assessed, such as with gases, you may need to seek specialist help.



Risk Assessments

Gas Safe's Expertise

All Gas Safes consultants are experienced individuals who have many years background knowledge of not only the gas industry but also the numerous applications using gas cylinders and cryogenic liquids.

Our consultants are able to come onto your site and undertake detailed, specific Risk Assessments of all activities utilising gas cylinders and cryogenic liquids; storage of gases and cryogenic liquids, working environments, manual handling of gas cylinders and cryogenic vessels and fire hazards.

Our on-site Risk Assessment package provides organisations with an invaluable overview of the hazards and risks that may be present within the workplace and readily identifies high risk activities that require immediate attention, as well as methodologies to reduce risk levels and ensure compliance with relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice.

Risk Assessments - What does it cost?

We charge our time on an hourly basis as, until we arrive on site, we don't know the full extent of the Risk Assessment(s) to be conducted.

For time spent on site our fees are £125 per hour, with a minimum of 3.5 hours being payable.

For time spent producing the Risk Assessment(s) our fees are £62.50 per hour.

All prices are subject to vat at the standard rate.

**To discuss your specific requirements.
Please contact us**

01270 758890

E-mail: admin@gassafeconsultants.co.uk

Visit www.gassafeconsultants.co.uk

Or write to;
Gas Safe Consultants Limited,
Waterloo House,
2 Station Road
Elworth,
Sandbach,
Cheshire
CW11 3JG

