

# WORKING IN THE DISHWASHING AREA

Dishwashing areas have chemicals and heat. Usually the floor is slippery, there may be broken glass, and it is often necessary to work in a fixed or awkward position.



## Hazard: Chemicals

### Details

Powerful chemicals are used to clean the dishes.

### Threat

- Serious injury to your lungs, skin, and eyes

## Safe Work Guidelines

### Before You Use Chemicals

- Make sure that you know the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) symbols and what they mean
- Know where to find the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
- Know where the closest first-aid kit and emergency eyewash station are
- If you are not sure about what chemical you are using, ask your supervisor
- Make sure that you have been trained enough to use the chemicals safely

### While You Are Using Chemicals

- Read the labels before you mix chemicals
- Use the chemical only as directed on the label
- Use the personal protective equipment (PPE) required by your employer and/or the MSDS
- If you transfer a chemical to another container, make sure that the new container is labeled properly with all the WHMIS information
- Wash your hands after handling chemicals, even if you were wearing gloves

### At All Times

- Store the chemical in a locked area that has warning signs posted
- Do not store a chemical in a food container or store food in an empty chemical container

## Hazard: Heat

### Details

Dishes coming out of the dishwasher are hot.

### Threat

- Scalded or burned hands
- Respiratory hazards from chemical steam

### Safe Work Guidelines

- Be aware that steam can also burn you
- Allow dishes to cool before stacking them
- Use gloves and an apron as PPE against heat
- Warn others who may be handling the hot dishes

## Hazard: Slippery Floors

### Details

Slippery floors may result from spills and dishwasher overflow on the floor.

### Threat

- Serious injury from a fall

### Safe Work Guidelines

- If you spill something
  - Follow your workplace clean-up procedures immediately
  - If you find a spill that someone else has left, clean it up right away
  - If possible, warn others about the spill
  - If you step into a spill, clean off your shoes right away
- Wear the right non-slip footwear for your job
- To avoid spilling food and liquids, scrape and stack dishes carefully

- Know where to find the mop and wet floor sign
- Walk, do not run

## Hazard: Broken Glass

### Details

Broken glass may be found in the dishwasher or the garbage.

### Threat

- Minor or major cuts

### Safe Work Guidelines

- Make sure that you know the right procedure for getting rid of broken glass in your workplace (e.g., wrap glass pieces in newspaper or put them in a plastic bucket to throw them out)
- Do not put broken glass into the garbage unprotected
- Do not touch broken glass with your bare hands – use PPE such as gloves
- Clean up broken glass thoroughly – do not leave any pieces on the floor
- Throw out any food, drink, or ice that broken glass may have fallen into\

## Hazard: Electricity

### Details

Electrical hazards may be caused by improper grounding, or from faulty equipment, wires, or electrical outlets.

### Threat

- Electrical shock
- Electrocutation

### Safe Work Guidelines

- Make sure that any standard outlets in the dishwashing area are replaced with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets
- Make sure that grounded equipment has a 3-prong plug
- To identify faulty or poor cords, check cords regularly
- To unplug electrical equipment, pull the plug, not the cord
- Do not make octopus connections (too many plugs in one outlet)
- Keep cords away from heat, water, and oil, which can damage the insulation and cause a shock

### Hazard: Working in a Fixed or Awkward Position

#### Details

Muscles tire quickly when you work in a fixed or awkward position, causing higher risk of injury.

#### Threat

- Muscle strain and associated tendon, nerve, disc, or joint pain

### Safe Work Guidelines

- Make sure that your working area is organized to prevent strain on your body
- Stay in a comfortable working position
- Be aware of working conditions, heights of stations, anti-fatigue mats, etc.
- Learn to recognize signs of tiredness that may result from work-related ergonomic problems
- If you have to lift anything that is heavy or awkward, ask for help, use a dolly or call another person

© Workplace Safety & Prevention Services 2011.

Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS) grants permission to approved end users to reproduce this document in whole or in part, provided its intended use is for non-commercial, educational purposes and that full acknowledgement is given to the WSPS. Approved end users are firms registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. WSPS reserves the right to extend this permission to other stakeholders and interested parties by express written permission upon application. WSPS extends no warranty to materials amended or altered by the end user. Under no circumstances is this document, or any portion thereof, to be duplicated for purposes of sale or for external reproduction or distribution.

Revised: November 2011