

COMMON HEALTH & SAFETY PROBLEMS

A GUIDE FOR DESIGNERS, BUYERS, AND OTHER FACTORY VISITORS

Every factory visit is an opportunity to check on some common and easy-to-spot health & safety issues:



1. TAKE THIS LIST WITH YOU TO THE FACTORY.



2. NOTE ANY POSSIBLE PROBLEMS YOU SEE



3. TAKE PHOTOS WHENEVER POSSIBLE

Give your list, notes and any photos to your brand's CSR manager and ask them to follow up on your comments.

FACTORY NAME: _____

VISIT DATE: _____

VISITOR NAME: _____

NUMBER OF WORKERS: _____



FIRE & ELECTRICAL SAFETY

1. Are emergency exits locked or blocked by fabric, machines, etc?

Notes:

2. Are emergency evacuation routes clear? (with exit signs, evacuation maps, floor markings, etc)

Notes:

3. Do the workstations look crowded or difficult to escape in case of fire?

Notes:

4. Do you see fire extinguishers?

Notes:

5. Is firefighting equipment blocked by fabric, machines, etc?

Notes:

Are areas around fire equipment, control panels, exits, etc. marked with 'keep clear' signs or floor markings?

Notes:

Do you see damaged, open or worn-out electrical cables/panels?

Notes:

Are there fire warning signs in storage areas (e.g. no smoking)?

Notes:

Is fabric & clothing stored in a tidy manner? (messy storage allows fires to spread quickly)

Notes:

Is fabric or clothing stored near machinery? (sparks from machines is a main cause of fires)

Notes:

BUILDING SAFETY & GENERAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Does the building look unsafe? (e.g. dangerous stairs, cracks in the walls, unsafe-looking elevators, etc?)

Notes:

Is the floor wet or slippery?

Notes:

Are the first aid kits missing/empty/locked?

Notes:

Is the FWF worker info sheet with the helpline number posted?

Notes:

Is the lighting bad at workstations?

Notes:

Is there obvious safety equipment missing? (e.g guards on sewing machines, safety gloves for cutting machines, etc?)

Notes:

In noisy areas, do workers have ear protection?

Notes:

Do standing workers have floor mats or rest chairs?

Notes:

Are employees exposed to chemicals, solvents, etc without protective gear?

Notes:

Are the chemicals stored in an unsafe way? (messy, not in fireproof cabinets, etc.)?

Notes:

Is the air quality bad? (chemical odors, dusty, too hot/cold)

Notes:

Does the factory use denim sandblasting? (Certain types are not allowed by FWF.)

Notes:

Are the bathrooms for workers clean?

Notes:

Are there separate bathrooms for men and women?

Notes:

Is there clean, fresh drinking water available?

Notes:

Does the cafeteria/canteen look clean?

Notes:

Does the cafeteria have enough seats? (large factories with small cafeterias mean workers often have to eat on a dirty floor)

Notes:

Do you see anything else that might be a problem?

Some health & safety issues can be identified during an informal visit, but this checklist should never be used to 'approve' a factory or as a substitute for professional audits.