Garages – General Requirements – Fact Sheet



WHAT ARE SOME GENERAL THINGS TO KNOW WHEN STARTING A GARAGE BUSINESS?

- Find out what legislation applies to your business and how to comply (e.g., occupational health and safety; workers' compensation; employment standards; fire and building codes, etc.) and ensure that employees, including supervisors know their responsibilities.
- Know the hazards associated with the activities and tasks you will be doing and ensure that employees understand the hazards, what precautions to take, and what to do in case of an accident or emergency.

What are some safety tips for the general layout of a garage?

- Keep, inspect, and maintain wiring, heating and ventilation systems in good condition.
- Provide adequate lighting with no glare; supply additional local lighting for hazardous procedures to ensure increased vision and reduced eye strain and fatigue.
- Replace any flickering fluorescent tubes – the "strobe" effect may make some moving parts appear as stationary.
- Designate separate areas for operations such as welding, cleaning, painting, lubricating and battery maintenance.
- Allow adequate floor space for the volume of work expected.
- Provide and maintain a clean lunchroom and washroom that are separate from the work area.
- Do not block or obstruct access to fire extinguishers, doorways, and emergency exits.
- Ensure that emergency lighting works.
- Ensure good ventilation. All running engines (vehicles, lawn mowers, snow blowers, etc.) produce carbon monoxide. Exposure to carbon monoxide can cause headaches, sleepiness, loss of consciousness and death. It is also a flammable gas.

What are some general operational safety tips?

- Use tools and service equipment only for the tasks for which they are

designed.
- Keep power tool guards and safety devices in place and functional.
- Inspect and service fire extinguishers regularly.
- Keep first aid kits fully stocked and accessible.
- Have emergency eyewash stations or showers where appropriate and keep them clean from dirt and debris.
- Post emergency phone numbers.
- Keep floors and benches clean to reduce slipping and tripping hazards.
- Empty trash containers regularly.
- Discard rags, paper and other items soaked with flammable materials (such as oil, gas or solvents) in approved metal containers.
- Don’t store or eat food or drinks in work areas where they may become contaminated.

What should I keep in mind when storing materials?

Pile materials securely:

- Cross-tie piles.
- Do not use damaged cartons.
- Allow nothing to overhang.
- Do not overload.
- Place wedges beside stock that could roll.
- Keep aisles clear.
- Place heavy items on shelves at waist height. Identify the weight of unfamiliar loads and load limits on shelving.
- Clearly label all chemicals and materials. Check the material safety data sheet (MSDS) or safety data sheet (SDS) for storage and handling instructions. Contact the manufacturer if you require more information.
- Label flammable and combustible materials clearly and store in a separate place, away from heat and ignition sources. Laws may require separate rooms or cabinets. Check with your local authorities.
- Use only approved safety containers for flammable and combustible liquids.
- Ground and bond containers when transferring flammable liquids from one container to another.
- Store compressed gas cylinders upright, in cages designed for this purpose or secured with chain or brackets.
- Store and dispose of waste oils and fluids according to local by-laws or environmental regulations.
- Store and dispose of cloths and rags used to clean up grease, oils, lubricants etc. in a fire-proof container.
- Close valves on empty cylinders. Make sure valve protection caps are in place.
- Keep fuel gas cylinders and petroleum products separate from oxygen cylinders.
- Do not smoke or use matches near flammable materials.
- Do not store combustible material, such as paper or work clothes, near heating units.
- Do not eat in work areas. Always wash hands before eating (or smoking) to prevent transfer of contaminants from your hands to your mouth.

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