

7. Hygiene in factories

Introduction

We believe that workers have a right to work and rest in a clean and hygienic environment. Not only is poor hygiene a risk to workers' health but it can also reduce productivity and morale.

An untidy workplace can be a health and safety risk, lead to the spread of disease and prevent workers from evacuating in case of a fire or accident. It is important that all areas of the worksite are clean and tidy and this includes:

- production areas
- storage areas
- toilet and washing facilities
- kitchen, canteens
- waste and drainage areas
- accommodation, if provided.

How do I know if the standards at my site are acceptable?

Firstly, you will need to establish a cleaning system, define responsibilities, and ensure that all areas are frequently checked:

- The production area and storage area must be clean with clear aisles, well lit and properly ventilated.
- Toilet and washing facilities must be clean, disinfected, odourless and

well-lit, with good drainage and hot and cold running water.

- The kitchens and canteens must have scrupulously clean food preparation areas, and odourless, with good drainage and hot and cold running water.
- The area used for waste must be clean and all waste must be enclosed

in bins to discourage vermin – drainage areas must be free flowing, odourless and regularly disinfected.

- The accommodation must also be clean, well lit, with clear corridors and stairs, and properly ventilated. The workers must be encouraged to keep their personal space clean and tidy.

The following are a few examples of good and bad practice and of what action is needed to improve the situation.

- 1** There must be a supply of drinking water in each production area. This must be clean and safe and ideally should be both hot and cold. Workers should have unrestricted access to this.

*If this is not the case this facility must be added.

Poor drinking water facilities



Good drinking water facilities



- 2** Sufficient toilets and washing facilities should be in place, at a minimum of 1 toilet per 25 male and 1 per 20 female employees. Where there are more than 100 employees, an additional 1 toilet should be provided for every 50 male and 35 female employees.¹ These should be cleaned regularly with disinfectant and be odour free. They should be at a reasonable distance from the workplace and they should be segregated by sex.²

*If you do not have the appropriate number of toilets, you must consider adding more.

Poor factory toilet facilities



Good factory toilet facilities



This fact sheet is specifically relating to Chinese law.

How do I know if the standards at my site are acceptable?

The following are a few more examples of good and bad practice and of what action is needed to improve the situation.

3 Eating and drinking should be restricted to certain areas away from the production site. This is especially important where chemicals and other hazardous substances are in use – and where they are stored.

Food preparation areas and staff should obtain the relevant health certification. Ensure your hygiene certificates to operate a canteen are up to date and valid.

Whether your canteen is on or off site, visit it and ensure the conditions are clean, pest free and safe for food preparation and consumption.³

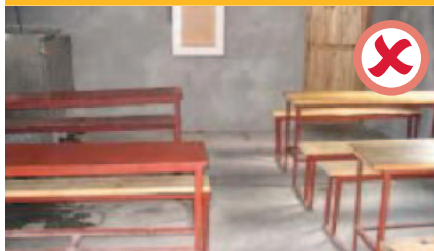
Poor kitchen facilities



Good kitchen facilities



Poor canteen facilities



Good canteen facilities



4 Accommodation, whether on or off site, must not be located in or above production and storage areas⁴. It should be clean, hygienic and not overcrowded, this means there should not be less than 2.6m² per person⁵ and it is recommended that no more than 14 people should be in one room. Sufficient toilet and shower facilities must be provided.⁶

*If your accommodation is off site, ensure that a member of the factory visits it regularly to check on the standards.

Poor accommodation facilities



Good accommodation facilities



Other steps you can take:

- If hygiene is a persistent problem, consider implementing an incentive scheme to ensure that workers keep their workstations and accommodation clean and tidy.
- If workers at your site are engaged in dirty or heavy manual labour, ensure you provide showers for their use, that are regularly cleaned.
- Arrange for regular pest control assessments by pest control experts.
- Ensure the site is well maintained for example stop leaks and draughts, clean up spills, clean off mould, clean ventilation systems and fans regularly.

This fact sheet is specifically relating to Chinese law

Reference:

1. Clause 73, Factory Industrial Hygiene Design Standards
2. Clause 70, Regulations on Health and Safety in Factory
3. Clause 26 & 27, China Food Hygiene Law

4. Clause 15, China Fire Prevention Law
5. Design Standards of Dormitory
6. Design Standards of Dormitory



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