



BPCA

British Pest
Control
Association

Code of Best Practice

Health and safety for pest management companies

Version 1: May 2023.

British Pest Control Association Code of Best Practice for Health and safety

A BPCA Code of Best Practice is a set of written rules which explains how people working in our industry should behave in a particular situation. It encompasses relevant legislation but is not the law in itself.

However, were a member to act outside of the norms outlined in the COBP, they may be subject to disciplinary action or be in breach of legislation. Members must abide by Codes of Best Practice

in their day-to-day work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Association.

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bPCA.org.uk/codes

Driving excellence in pest management

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British Pest Control Association Code of Best Practice for Health and Safety

Health and safety forms an integral part of any business. In pest management, safety will dictate what employers need to do to keep employees and those who come into contact with our treatments safe.

Pest management is a service sector and requires careful consideration of our chemical and non-chemical techniques.

This Code details the minimum standards all pest professionals should follow when carrying out their work.

Legislation

Health and safety at work act 1974

The Act sets out the general duties which employers have towards employees and members of the public, and employees have to themselves and each other.

These duties are qualified in the Act by the principle of "so far as is reasonably practicable". In other words, an employer does not have to take measures to avoid or reduce the risk if they are technically impossible or if the time, trouble or cost of the steps would be grossly disproportionate to the risk.

The law requires what good management and common sense would lead employers to do anyway: look at the risks and take sensible measures to tackle them.

The following regulations come under the HASWA:

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (the Management Regulations)

"This Code of Best Practice aims to touch on the important points a professional must be aware of and consider, to ensure health and safety standards are met."

The Management Regulations make it more explicit what employers are required to do to manage health and safety under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Like the Act they sit under, they apply to every work activity.

The main requirement for employers is to carry out a risk assessment. Employers with five or more employees need to record the significant findings of the risk assessments. It is good practice for companies of all sizes to record risk assessments.



Your risk assessment should only include what you could reasonably be expected to know - you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

-Health and Safety Executive

In many cases, generic and specific risk assessments will complement each other and be accompanied by method statements.

Generic risk assessments

Generic risk assessments are those done for high-risk activities that may be considered more routine. Examples include:

- Routine service visits
- Manual handling

- Working at height
- The use of air weapons.

These risk assessments may be required if you have five or more employees. If you have less than five employees, you may still need to record such assessments, especially if there is deemed a significant risk.

Site/task-specific risk assessments

Task or site-specific risk assessments will be needed for sites or tasks considered significant hazards. For example, a bird-proofing job at height on a sloped roof would require a site-specific risk assessment.

The risk assessment should cover all the hazards specific to that site only.

Method statements

These documents are used alongside risk assessments to ensure specific high-risk tasks and activities involved in a project are safe. Method statements are documents that detail exactly how to carry out work safely.

The purpose of method statements is to describe the safety precautions that control risks identified in the risk assessment.

They detail:

- The equipment being used during projects
- The control equipment required to keep workers safe
- The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needed to keep workers safe
- Any measures that keep site visitors safe while tasks are ongoing

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Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) Regulations 2002

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) is the law that does what it says on the tin. It requires employers to control substances that are potentially hazardous to human health! Pest professionals must ensure we reduce the risks posed by pesticides and other chemicals. This includes protecting people outside our organisations, such as customers or anyone else that might come into contact with our work.

You can prevent or minimise exposure to hazardous substances by:

1

Find out the health hazards of specific chemicals by utilising the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) provided by the chemical manufacturer.



Most businesses use substances, or products that are mixtures of substances. Some processes create substances. These could cause harm to employees, contractors and other people.

-Health and Safety Executive

2

Carry out a CoSHH assessment of each product. Where you have more than five employees, this must be recorded and shared with the relevant parties

3

Provide control measures to reduce harm to health by selecting the least potentially harmful treatment that is reasonably likely to work.

4

Ensure all control measures are reviewed and updated as necessary, once per annum as a minimum

5

Provide information, instruction and training for employees, clients and anyone else likely to come into contact with your treatment.

6

The appropriate waste carriers licence will be held and all waste disposed of as per your as part of an integrated management plan

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

These Regulations place duties on people and companies who own, operate, or control work equipment. PUWER also sets responsibilities on businesses and organisations whose employees use work equipment, whether owned by them or not.

PUWER requires that equipment provided for use at work is:

- Suitable
- Safe and maintained
- Trained user
- Used per manufacturer guidance

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 2022)

If PPE is required, employers must ensure their workers have sufficient information, instruction and training on the use of PPE. The Regulation places a duty on employers to ensure that suitable PPE is provided to employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health or safety while at work. In pest management, we must ensure that all PPE is maintained and is fit for purpose, including Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE).



If an employee refuses to wear PPE, the company will still be held accountable. Employees cannot be held responsible regardless of ignorance. Refusal to wear PPE should be treated seriously.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended) (MHOR)

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR) aims to reduce the incidence and prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) arising from the manual handling of loads at work. MHOR places duties upon employers in respect of

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their employees. Identical responsibilities are placed on the self-employed in respect of their own safety. The Regulations do not impose duties on employers concerning other persons, such as your clients.

In pest management, manual handling may occur when:

- Receiving deliveries
- Handling waste
- Inspecting for pests, ie manoeuvring machinery to inspect behind
- Carrying equipment
- Lifting drain covers.



Employers and those in control of any work at height activity must make sure work is properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people.

-Health and Safety Executive

The Work at Height Regulations 2005

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WHR) aims to prevent death and injury by a fall from a height.

If you are an employer or control work at height (for example, facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height), the Regulations apply to you.

In pest management, we may work at height when:

- Accessing attics
- Accessing roof areas for inspection
- Inspecting voids
- Installing bird-proofing material.

Work at height means working in any place where, if there were no precautions, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. For example

You are working at height if you:

- Are working on a ladder or a flat roof
- Could fall through a fragile surface
- Could fall into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

Hierarchy of controls

PPE should be the last resort to protect against hazards. Consider controls in the following order, with elimination being the most effective and PPE being the least effective:

Elimination - physically remove the hazard.

Substitution - replace the hazard.

Engineering controls - isolate people from the hazard.

Administrative controls - change the way people work.

PPE - protect the worker with equipment.

PPE should be the last resort to protect against hazards.

Professional fundamentals

7

Adhere to all health and safety legislation applicable to your relevant work areas.

8

Carry out written risk assessments for significant hazards even, if you employ less than five people.

9

Review all risk assessments at least annually.

10

Carry out written site-specific risk assessments for all contracted customers where significant hazards are present (if the generic risk assessment does not fit).



A COSHH assessment should include hazards and risks from substances in your workplace. Hazards aren't always substances labelled as such. For example, wood dust from sanding can be considered a hazardous substance.

-Health and Safety Executive

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11

Carry out written CoSHH assessments for all potentially harmful chemicals used.

12

Ensure employees have the proper PPE and RPE for their work.

13

Keep written records of equipment and PPE maintenance for your employees.

14

Always leave safety advice for customers after any work. Safety advice must be left for the person residing in or on the property or land, not just the paying customer (where applicable).

15

Regardless of company size, members must have a written statement of intent.

16

You must communicate health and safety measures with employees, and records of this must be kept for at least two years.

17

All staff must receive regular health and safety training appropriate to their field of work. All training (even ad-hoc training provided in the field) must be recorded.

18

There must be a procedure in place for reporting, recording, and preventing accidents.

19

Near-miss incidents must be recorded.

Further reading

BPCA Code of Best Practice for Professional Reports

This Code seeks to clarify what BPCA members must provide to all customers as a minimum, in terms of treatment reports. bpca.org.uk/codes

BPCA Code of Best Practice for Fixed Storage of Pesticides

This Code aims to provide information to professional users of pesticides on the important elements to remember when storing pesticides. bpca.org.uk/codes

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 - HSE guidance

For straightforward guidance on how to comply with the health and safety law. hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm



The British Pest Control Association requires that its members meet a range of criteria including strict abidance to all of our Codes of Best Practice. You can search for our members on the BPCA website bpca.org.uk/find

BPCA makes strenuous efforts to ensure the accuracy and current relevance of its publications, which are intended for use by technically competent persons. However, this does not remove the need for technical and managerial judgement in practical situations. Nor do they confer any immunity or exemption from relevant legal requirements, including by-laws.

If you suspect something in this document is incorrect or out of date, please report it to technical@bpca.org.uk so we can review it.

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