

**Issue #9**

Lessons from a HSW Incident - Review your Emergency Response Protocols for Gas Alarms

There was recently a serious incident where a worker was exposed to carbon monoxide when re-activating gas supply after the supply had been isolated, because the emergency alarm was activated the previous night. The worker sought medical advice following the incident.

Local areas need to regularly review their emergency response protocols when working with hazardous gases and responding to gas alarms. When gas alarms are connected to Si-Pass, Local areas should ensure security is provided with the emergency protocols they need to follow. Local areas also need to advise security if these emergency protocols are amended.

Laboratories containing hazardous gases must be restricted as appropriate and local supervisors should ensure those handling the gases are appropriately trained, and that appropriate first aid response is available based on information contained in the Safety Data Sheet. This will help to ensure that only appropriate people respond to gas alarms.

Beware the Risks: Lithium-based Batteries

The use of rechargeable batteries is increasing, powering all sorts of devices from handheld vacuum cleaners to electric scooters and Bluetooth speakers. However, lithium-based batteries can pose a hidden danger, as they're prone to overheating, melting, igniting, or even exploding.

Stay safe with these tips:

1. Only buy quality batteries and chargers from trustworthy sources.
2. Check for approval: Ensure your charger has the Australian Regulatory Compliance Mark or equivalent.
3. Compatibility is key: Only use the supplied compatible charger.
4. Don't overcharge them: Charge only until full, and avoid overnight charging sessions.
5. Spot the warning signs: Steer clear of damaged batteries (bulging, leaking, cracked, dented).
6. Set up safe charging zones: Charge on a secure surface away from flammable materials and in a well-ventilated area.
7. Replace overheating or swollen laptop/tablet/phone batteries ASAP.

What's New?

It's been a busy couple of months in the policy team, with over a dozen procedures and information sheets going through consultation and being updated. Here's what's new:

Updated Procedures

Reporting and Investigation

Schedule of Programmable Events

Corrective Actions

Updated FAQs

Plant/Equipment Acquisition

Vehicle Safety Management

Children in the Workplace

Safe Operating Procedures

Cyanides

Protective Clothing and Footwear

Schedule of Programmable Events

Laboratory and Workshop Safety

Respiratory Protection

Emergency Shower/Eyewash

Prevention of Falls

Hearing Protection

Reporting and Investigation

Updated Webpages

Guidance on [Contractor HSW induction](#) has been clarified on the [HSW Training and Induction](#) webpage.

New guidance for supervisors on [performing a risk assessment](#) has been added to the [Supervisors' Toolkit](#).

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