



NORTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL

## STAFF MANUAL

Guide to Health & Safety at Work

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## 1. **Food & Safety**

Food safety involves safeguarding food from anything that could harm the health of consumers. While standards enable everyone to enjoy their food without illness, injury or other problems, poor standards can lead to all kinds of harm and even death. As food safety is so important to everyone, food handlers have legal obligations for keeping food safe to eat.

Outbreaks of food-borne illness and questions about food and health have often been in the headlines in recent years. At the same time, cases of food-borne illness have increased dramatically. In England and Wales, for example, the number has more than quadrupled over a decade. No single reason has been identified for the increase, but factors may include:

- ◆ Changes in eating habits, including a greater reliance on re-heated foods and an increase of meals and snacks eaten away from home
- ◆ Changes in shopping habits, including more bulk-buying with food being stored at home for longer periods
- ◆ The intensive rearing of food crops and animals
- ◆ A reduction in the use of preservatives
- ◆ Changes in the way that official figures are recorded, with a wider range of illnesses now included in the statistics
- ◆ Increased reporting of cases because of greater public awareness

### a. **Key Words**

**Food safety** - the safeguarding of, or protection, of food from anything that could harm consumers health

**Food Hygiene** - All the practical measures involved in keeping food safe and wholesome through all stages of production to point of sale or consumption.

**Legislation** - the general term for laws, regulations and directives.

### b. **The Impact of Food-Borne Illness**

High standards of food safety bring important benefits to everyone, consumers, employees and business proprietors. But there are high costs for poor hygiene including pain and distress for individuals and the loss of revenue and reputation for businesses.

### c. **Benefits Of Effective Food Hygiene**

- ◆ Satisfied customers
- ◆ A good reputation
- ◆ Loyal customers
- ◆ Less food wastage and controlled running costs
- ◆ A pleasant place to work
- ◆ Compliance with food safety laws
- ◆ Better job security

### d. **Costs Of Poor Food Hygiene**

- ◆ Food poisoning
- ◆ A bad reputation
- ◆ Customer complaints and possible loss of revenue
- ◆ Higher running costs because food has to be thrown away
- ◆ Poor working conditions
- ◆ Legal action and penalties
- ◆ Possible redundancies and closure of business

## 2. **Food Safety and The Law**

Rules covering the handling of food have existed for centuries. In modern times laws have been developed to cover every aspect of the handling and sale of food. Generally speaking, the legislation aims to protect consumers from illness and injury and to ensure that food is wholesome and fit to eat.

Employers have legal obligations to provide various facilities at work such as wash hand basins, in the interests of food safety. They must also ensure that everyone who deals with food as part of his or her job and anyone else whose work could affect food such as cleaning staff, engineers and delivery drivers are supervised and given instruction and / or training that is appropriate to the work they do.

In recent years food legislation has concentrated on methods that identify and stop or reduce the risks to food safety in every workplace. This is known as Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) is used more widely. By law, employers must analyse the food safety hazards involved in their type of work and take steps to control these hazards. They must keep a constant check on the effectiveness of the steps taken and make any necessary adjustments to the way work is carried out.

#### **a. You and Food Safety Control**

Hazard analysis may be carried out by specialists, managers, supervisors or teams of people from throughout the business. You could be involved in a range of actions that play an essential part in hazard analysis for instance, keeping accurate records of temperatures. Whatever your work involves, you will play an important part in food safety control by:

- ◆ Following the rules at your workplace
- ◆ Protecting food from contamination
- ◆ Following the basic rules of temperature control
- ◆ Watching out for any food hazards
- ◆ Reporting faults, problems or possible food hazards to your manager

#### **b. Enforcement of Food Legislation**

Most countries have food inspectors who give advice and assistance to food businesses as well as ensuring that food companies obey the law. In Britain the inspectors are usually Environmental Health Officers (EHOs). Inspectors and EHO's usually have the power to;

- ◆ Enter food premises
- ◆ Inspect the premises and investigate possible offences
- ◆ Take away suspect food and have it condemned if it is unsafe
- ◆ Take company to court for breaking food safety laws

Food handlers should co-operate with the food inspectors and EHO's and it may be an offence to obstruct their inquiries.

#### **c. Penalties**

Breaking a food safety law can result in, a fine, a prison sentence, closure of the business, a criminal record or the business paying compensation to the customers affected by unsafe food.

#### **d. Principles of Hygiene**

- ◆ Keep yourself and your workplace clean
- ◆ Wear suitable clean washable protective clothing
- ◆ Protect food from bacterial contamination
- ◆ Restrict the time that high risk foods are left at danger zone temperatures
- ◆ Keep hot food at **63 Degrees Celsius** or hotter
- ◆ Keep cold food at below **5 Degrees Celsius**
- ◆ Tell your employer if you have symptoms of a food borne illness
- ◆ Report all food hazards, faults and suspicions of contamination

#### **e. Food Handlers and The Law**

Everyone who deals with food as part of his or her work has a legal responsibility to safeguard food. Other people whose work could affect food safety, such as cleaners, also have legal responsibilities to protect food from contamination. The extent of your legal obligations depends upon the type of work activities and your role within the company.

Food handlers must not:

- ◆ Do anything that would expose food to contamination
- ◆ Sell food that is unfit for human consumption
- ◆ Sell food with an expired date mark
- ◆ Work with food if they have food poisoning or similar symptoms until their employer or doctor says that it is safe to do so

## **f. Food Poisoning**

**Bacteria**- Microscopic life forms are the most common cause of food poisoning. Bacteria referred to as *pathogenic bacteria*, are harmful and cause illness. Such bacteria include Salmonella, Staphylococcus Aureus and Clostridium Perfringens.

Food poisoning is a result of eating large numbers of pathogenic bacteria that are living on the food. Other causes of food poisoning are:

- ◆ **Viruses** - Micro-organisms thriving on and in people, animals and other organisms
- ◆ **Moulds** - Micro-organisms that produce toxins on food such as nuts
- ◆ Poisonous plants and fish-including red kidney beans, rhubarb leaves some fungi such as toadstools and fish that has been poorly processed
- ◆ Chemicals and metals-substances absorbed into food from unsuitable metal containers or from industrial, agricultural or cleaning chemicals used incorrectly or carelessly

Food poisoning usually starts soon after eating contaminated food. Incubation can be a few hours or several days. The most common symptoms of food poisoning are abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and nausea.

## **g. Food-Borne Disease**

A number of diseases are passed onto humans by microorganisms that are carried by food or water. Many of the pathogenic organisms are transported by water. *Campylobacter Enteritis* is a common food-borne disease, which causes diarrhoea. Other food-borne diseases include *Escherichia Coli 0157 (E.coli)*, typhoid, dysentery and a form of hepatitis.

The incubation period can be days, weeks or even months, with the illness lasting for one day to possibly a few years because the infection can invade the blood stream, causing serious long term health problems.

Ideal conditions for bacteria are **food, moisture, warmth and time.**

## **3. Contamination and Prevention of Illness**

Contamination is the presence of something harmful or objectionable in food or drink, which creates a risk of illness, injury or discomfort. No one wants to eat contaminated food and the law says that food handlers must protect food from contamination.

### **Key Words**

<i>Contamination</i> -	The presence in food of any harmful or objectionable Substance.
<i>Contaminant</i> -	Any substance or object found in food that makes the food harmful or objectionable
<i>Risk</i> -	The likelihood of harm.
<i>Microbial</i> -	Anything to do with microorganisms (microbes). Sometimes referred to as a microbiological.
<i>Hazard</i> -	Anything that could cause harm to the consumer. Food becomes hazardous when it becomes contaminated.
<i>Food Contact Surfaces</i> -	Any surfaces that touches food therefore creates a Contamination risk.
<i>Vehicles of Contamination</i> -	Hands, spoons or anything else that can carry micro-organisms onto food causing contamination.

## **a. Causes Of Contamination**

Food contamination is caused by three groups of contaminants, which are described as **Physical, Chemical and Microbial.**

Microbial contaminants are the main cause of food-borne illness.

Examples of physical contaminants are:

- ◆ Stones, pips, leaves or stalks from fruit and vegetables
- ◆ Shell fragments from nuts, shellfish and eggs

- ◆ Scales from fish, bone fragments from poultry and meat, feathers from poultry
- ◆ Paper, string, plastic or staples from food packaging
- ◆ Nuts, bolts and screws from machinery or equipment
- ◆ Insects their eggs and droppings

Examples of chemical contaminants:

- ◆ Cleaning chemicals, industrial processing chemicals, agricultural chemicals and pesticides

Examples of microbial contaminants:

- ◆ Food poisoning bacteria from a wide range of sources, viruses and microscopic parasites

### **b. Vehicles of Contamination**

Anything that enables bacteria to travel is referred to as a 'vehicle of contamination'. People, animals, equipment and utensils are the most common vehicles of contamination. These vehicles of contamination move pathogenic bacteria from a contaminated source, such as raw meat, to a place with ideal conditions for multiplication. Food which is high in protein and moisture, with sufficient warmth and time to multiply.

### **c. Preventing Bacterial Contamination**

Bacterial contamination leads to most cases of food poisoning and food-borne disease - and it takes only a small number of pathogenic bacteria, such as *Campylobacter jejuni* and *E.coli* 0157, to cause food-borne diseases. It is therefore particularly important to ensure that:

- ◆ Raw and high risk foods are kept apart at all times, including periods of storage, transport, preparation and display or point of sale
- ◆ All surfaces that come into contact with raw food are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after use.

### **d. Prevention Checklist**

The list below summarises ways to prevent physical, chemical and microbial contamination. As you will see, some measures safeguard against two or even three types of contamination.

- ◆ Keep food covered until use
- ◆ Use utensils, such as forks, tongs and slices, to move food. Don't touch food with your hands unless absolutely necessary
- ◆ Ensure that fastenings and name labels are properly secured to clothing and do not wear jewellery or keep pens or other items in pockets, hats or behind your ears
- ◆ Follow strict personal hygiene habits, including:
  - Keeping yourself clean and wearing suitable clean clothing
  - Washing your hands frequently
  - Keeping any cuts, boils or similar skin problems covered
- ◆ Resist any temptation to smoke, eat, drink or chew gum in food areas - you could transfer bacteria from your mouth to your hands then onto food
- ◆ Separate raw and cooked food at all times, including storage, transportation, preparation and point of sale (such as chilled display counter)
- ◆ Use separate equipment and utensils for the preparation of raw meats and poultry and other foods if possible
- ◆ Undo packaging in an area away from food
- ◆ Wash all raw vegetables, fruit and rice before use
- ◆ Keep food areas clean. Clean and disinfect all equipment, utensils and other food contact surfaces after every task involving food

- ◆ Maintain food areas and food equipment in good condition - report any signs of problems to your supervisor immediately
- ◆ Remove food waste and rubbish frequently throughout the day and dispose of it safely and hygienically
- ◆ Report any signs of food pests to your supervisor immediately
- ◆ Store cleaning chemicals in secure, clearly labelled containers well away from food
- ◆ Follow Northern Environmental instructions for cleaning chemicals - use the correct chemical for the job and follow the methods and quantities specified

#### **e. Jewellery**

Leave jewellery, including watches, at home or in your locker at work because bacteria can live on and under straps and rings, while gemstones and small parts could drop into food. Some companies allow food handlers to wear plain wedding ring and sleeper earrings.

#### **f. Appropriate Clothes**

Never wear or carry outdoor clothes into a food area because they could contaminate food or surfaces. Store outdoor clothes away from food areas; your employer should provide a separate area or locker for the purpose.

Put on protective clothes before entering a food area. Although protective clothes may keep your own clothes clean, this is not their main purpose. Protective clothing is designed to protect food from contamination and you from harm. It should be:

- ◆ Suitable for the task
- ◆ Clean and in good condition
- ◆ Light coloured, so that dirt will show easily, prompting you to change into clean replacement clothing
- ◆ Easy to clean

What you need to wear will largely depend upon the type of work you do. Typical examples include:

- ◆ Overalls, jackets, trousers, aprons
- ◆ Neck scarves, hats, hair nets, beard nets, moustache nets
- ◆ Non slip shoes, boots safety shoes
- ◆ Gloves, gauntlets

Other clothes, such as body warmers, may also be provided for working in cold environments.

A hat or head covering must cover as much of your hair as possible. In some companies food handlers must also wear hairnets to contain hair. If your hair is long, it must be tied or clipped back so it cannot hang loose outside the head covering. Beards and moustaches should also be covered. Always put on your head covering before you put on other protective clothing to avoid displacing hair. Never brush or comb your hair in a food area.

Do not wear protective clothing outside food areas, such as on your way to work, because you could cause contamination.

#### **g. Essential Hand Hygiene**

Even if you can avoid touching food by hand, you will touch equipment, utensils and surfaces throughout the work period, so your hands must be scrupulously clean at all times.

Wash your hands frequently throughout the day and always wash your hands;

#### **Before**

- ◆ Starting work
- ◆ Touching raw food or high risk food

## **Between**

- ◆ Handling raw and cooked food

## **After**

- ◆ Handling raw food
- ◆ Visiting the toilet
- ◆ Handling raw eggs in their shell
- ◆ Coughing or sneezing into your hands or handkerchief
- ◆ Touching your hair or face
- ◆ Carrying out cleaning jobs or touching containers of cleaning chemicals
- ◆ Dealing with rubbish/waste and bins
- ◆ Eating, drinking or smoking (in an area set aside for these activities)

Never test food with your fingers or lick your fingertip to make easier to pick up something.

Do not wear nail varnish because it can chip and flake into food and can hide dirt that must be removed before handling food.

### **h. Cuts And Spots**

Cover cuts, scratches and spots with a waterproof plaster to prevent spreading bacteria to food and to protect the wound or spot. Waterproof plasters should be brightly coloured - they are usually blue - so that they can be seen easily if they come off. Some plasters contain a thin metal strip so that they can be automatically identified by a metal detector on production lines. If a plaster does fall into food, tell your employer immediately.

If you have a septic cut or weeping spot or boil, you must report this to your employer before you start work. Remember that people are the main source of Staphylococcus food poisoning bacteria.

### **i. How to Wash Your Hands**

Always use a wash hand basin provided exclusively for this purpose. Use comfortably hot water and soap. Liquid soap is best because a bar of soap may carry bacteria left by the last person who used it. Rinse your hands before drying them. There are several methods available for drying your hands including disposable paper towels and clean roller towels. Never dry your hands on a tea towel, service cloth or protective clothing; you could cause contamination.

## **4. The Chemicals (Hazard Information & Packaging for Supply) Regulations**

CHIP aims to ensure that purchasers, user etc of chemicals are given enough information on the hazards to protect their health and safety.

This extends the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 for manufacturers and suppliers to ensure that preparations and substances that they supply are safe for use at work and provide adequate information on the hazards to allow the preparation or substance to be handled safely.

CHIP therefore governs the information that must be provided when hazardous chemicals are supplied.

- ◆ Oxidising
- ◆ Flammable
- ◆ Toxic
- ◆ Harmful
- ◆ Corrosive

### **a. Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

What are the COSHH regulations?

- ◆ 1997 European Directive
- ◆ Objective to reduce the number of accidents at work attributed to Hazardous substances labelled corrosive, irritant, harmful, toxic, oxidising, flammable, etc.
- ◆ Easy to avoid accidents, ingestion, inhalation, burns
- ◆ Employer must perform risk assessment
- ◆ High risk products should be replaced with less hazardous products where possible
- ◆ Information instruction and training should be provided

### **b. Why should I learn about COSHH?**

- ◆ Knowing about COSHH helps you understand what hazards you face
- ◆ Knowing about COSHH helps you to guard against these hazards

### **c. The Legal Requirements for Training**

Why train?

Training is of fundamental importance for those working with hazardous substances. The aim of training should be to make employees at all levels in the organisation aware of what they need to know, in order that they do not put themselves or others at risk of injury or ill health.

Health and Safety training has been required for many years for specific risks identified in legislation. However, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) introduced the requirement for more general training. Since 1974, health and safety legislation has embraced a wide range of activities, and the majority of this legislation contains specific requirements for health and safety training. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1990 are no exception to this, and lay down training requirements in the regulations and associated Approved Codes of Practice.

**Northern Environmental offers FREE and on going full COSHH and product training, please ask for more information.**

### **d. COSHH Rules**

- ◆ Store chemicals correctly
- ◆ Report any faulty or damaged containers
- ◆ Follow safe working practices
- ◆ Think safety and take care of yourself and your colleagues
- ◆ Read the labels
- ◆ Wear protective clothing as appropriate
- ◆ Never mix chemicals
- ◆ Never use unmarked containers
- ◆ Never use containers designed for other purposes
- ◆ Know the first aid procedures

### **Key Words**

<i>Legislation -</i>	Laws and regulations
<i>Food Hazard -</i>	Anything that could make food unsafe to eat
<i>Hazard Analysis -</i>	A method for assessing the food hazards in any food activity and introducing appropriate controls to ensure that food is safe to eat.
<i>HACCP -</i>	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, a formal system of hazard analysis.
<i>Control or control measure -</i>	An action designed to eliminate or reduce hazard to a Recognised safe level.
<i>Risk -</i>	The likelihood of harm
<i>EHO -</i>	Environmental Health Officer. EHOs enforce food safety Legislation in Britain.

## **5. Employers and The Law**

Proprietors (owners and employers) and anyone who is in charge of food premises, such as company directors and managers, have wider-ranging legal responsibilities than food handlers. Included in their responsibilities are ensuring that:

- ◆ The premises are registered with the local enforcement authority
- ◆ The premises are designed, equipped and operated in ways which prevent contamination and anything that could lead to illness or injury
- ◆ There are adequate washing facilities and arrangements for personal hygiene
- ◆ Staff are trained and supervised to work hygienically
- ◆ Food Hazards are assessed and action taken to stop or reduce risks to food safety - this is known as hazard analysis.

## **6. HACCP**

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) is a well established system of hazard analysis which helps food businesses to ensure that everything that should happen in the workplace to protect food safety does indeed take place. It involves keeping detailed records. HACCP follows the principles of:

- ◆ Assessing the potential food safety hazards in work activities
- ◆ Identifying the points where hazards occur and deciding which are critical for food safety - these are the "critical control points".
- ◆ Implementing appropriate controls for eliminating or reducing each hazard
- ◆ Establishing a monitoring system to ensure that the controls are effective - what should happen does happen
- ◆ Setting up procedures to correct any problems
- ◆ Reviewing the system from time to time and whenever operations change
- ◆ Documenting the hazard analysis

#### Identifying Hazardous Substances

It is important to identify substances that could cause harm. Purchased substances must be in their original containers and have safety labels and safety information. If dangerous chemicals have to be decanted before use, they should be poured into containers approved by the manufacturer and labelled appropriately.

Other sources of information, such as government literature, may also need to be consulted.

##### **a. First Principles**

- ◆ Hazardous substances can cause a wide range of health problems such as dermatitis and asthma. They may also cause other problems such as explosions or fires.
- ◆ The best method of prevention accidents and ill health is to avoid using, storing and creating hazardous substances altogether.
- ◆ Where hazardous substances have to be used, a full assessment must be carried out
- ◆ Prevention or control measures must be used to minimise the risks of injury or ill health
- ◆ People working with hazardous substances must be properly informed and trained in how to use substances safely
- ◆ Staff should report any health problems or defects to control measures or personal protective equipment immediately
- ◆ Always follow the safety rules of your workplace

##### **b. Preventing Exposure**

Exposure should be prevented whenever possible by avoiding the need for, or production of, hazardous substances. Safer substances should be substituted.

##### **c. Controlling Exposure**

Various techniques can be used to reduce risks even where hazardous substances are used, for example:

- ◆ Enclosing a process
- ◆ Using local and general ventilation
- ◆ Using safe systems of work and good housekeeping to minimise spills and leaks
- ◆ Reducing the number of people and time for which people and time for people are exposed
- ◆ Using suitable personal protective equipment

The control chosen must be checked on a regular basis to make sure they are performing efficiently. In some cases levels of hazardous substances in the air must be monitored. Staff must report any defects in control measures to managers immediately.

#### **7. Information and Training Procedures**

All employees should be given information, instruction and training to ensure that they are aware of hazards and the risks, and know which precautions to take. In particular, staff must know how to operate the control measures, use personal protective equipment, and take appropriate action in an emergency.

## **a. Hazards**

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm. A range of hazards can be found in any workplace. Examples include;

- ◆ Fire
- ◆ Electricity
- ◆ Harmful Substances
- ◆ Sharp Tools
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Damaged Flooring

## **8. Health and Safety Legislation**

The main issues that are controlled by health and safety legislation, but it does not cover every aspect of the law.

It is up to employers, the self-employed and those with specific responsibilities for health and safety to ensure that they are familiar with all the relevant legal obligations affecting their workplace. They must also ensure that they are sufficiently informed, trained and qualified to make decisions aimed at achieving appropriate health and safety standards. This may involve obtaining specialist advice and help.

Some aspects of health and safety might be covered by more than one branch of a country's legal system. In Britain, for instance, this means that a criminal court can impose penalties, including fines and imprisonment, when an individual or company breaks a law. In some cases, it is also possible for claims to be made through civil courts for financial compensation for harm, injury or damage.

Work Related Legislation

Legislation covers a wide range of health and safety issues. Laws in Britain tend to focus on one of the following:

- ◆ Particular types of work space - for example, factories and construction sites
- ◆ A specific topic affecting a variety of workplaces and work activities - see list below
- ◆ General issues which affect every workplace - such as the management of health and safety

Among the subjects covered by specific legislation are: -

- ◆ Workplaces
- ◆ Work Equipment
- ◆ Safety Signs
- ◆ Electricity
- ◆ Fire
- ◆ Highly Flammable Liquids
- ◆ Display Screen Equipment
- ◆ Manual Handling
- ◆ Hazardous Substances
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Personal Protective Equipment
- ◆ First Aid
- ◆ Reporting of Injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences
- ◆ Consultation with employees
- ◆ Health and Safety Management

## **9. Legal Responsibilities**

Employers, employees and other groups have specific legal responsibilities for health and safety at work. The duties are covered by the Health and Safety at work Act 1974 (in England, Wales and Scotland) and by the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 (in Northern Ireland). These give legal responsibilities to:

- ◆ Employers
- ◆ Employees
- ◆ The self-employed
- ◆ Designers, Manufacturers and suppliers
- ◆ People in control of work premises

## **10. Employers Duties**

Employers must ensure that the health, safety and welfare of employees are protected, so far as is reasonably practicable in particular employers must:

- ◆ Provide and maintain equipment and work systems which are safe and healthy
- ◆ Deal with substances, such as chemicals, safely
- ◆ Provide information, instruction, training and supervision
- ◆ Maintain safe and healthy workplaces with the necessary facilities
- ◆ Provide a health and safety policy statement when employing five or more people

They must also ensure that workplaces and work do not put visitors, members of the public and others at risk.

**Employers also have legal responsibilities. They must:**

- ◆ Take Care of their own health and safety at work
- ◆ Take care of the health and safety of others
- ◆ Co-operate with their employer
- ◆ Not misuse or interfere with anything provided for health and safety purposes

## **11. Duties of People in Control of Work Premises**

People who are in charge of a workplace have legal responsibilities to ensure safe and healthy premises.

Duties of designers, manufacturer, suppliers and installers

These groups have legal responsibilities for the design and construction of articles, the use of substances, and the testing and installation of their work. They must provide adequate information, such as instructions for the safe use of a machine.

## **12. The Management of Health and Safety at Work**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (in England, Wales and Scotland) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 (in Northern Ireland) have had major impact on the way companies control health and safety standards.

Employers must undertake a range of tasks including:

- ◆ Carrying out risk assessments
- ◆ Making arrangements for the planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of health and safety measures
- ◆ Appointing a competent person or persons to assist with health and safety
- ◆ Establishing emergency procedures
- ◆ Providing health and safety information and training

Enforcement officers help to ensure compliance with the law. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the enforcement authority for premises such as factories in England, Scotland and Wales. In most of the service sector - such as shops, offices and wholesale and catering premises -- enforcement is carried out by Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) or technical officers from the local authority. Until the formation of the health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland in 1999, enforcement in the province was undertaken by the Health and Safety inspectorate and the Health and Safety Agency.

Enforcement officers have wide ranging powers to help them to do their job. They can:

- Enter Premises
- Conduct Investigations
- Take Samples and photographs
- Ask questions
- Give advice
- Issue instructions - improvement and prohibition notices that must be carried out by law.