
These Regulations were issued in response to an amending European Directive and have replaced the previous Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992. PUWER 1998 came into force on 5 December 1998 and retains all the requirements of the 1992 Regulations, with some minor modifications. It introduces new requirements for mobile work equipment. There are three additional Approved Codes of Practice (ACoPs) (see References). The Power Presses Regulations 1965 and 1972 are revoked, as are the remaining sections of the Abrasive Wheels Regulations 1970 and the Woodworking Machines Regulations 1974. For convenience, additional or changed requirements are shown below in italics. The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) also came into force on 5.12.98 (see Hardfacts 5023). Lifting equipment also must comply with PUWER 1998.

Work Equipment and its Use
The Regulations define work equipment as follows: "Work equipment means any machinery, appliance, apparatus, tool or installation for use at work (whether exclusively or not)".

General Duties
Employers must ensure that work equipment is suitable for the purpose for which it is provided, by considering the working conditions, taking account of risks posed by the use of the equipment and ensuring that equipment is only used in operations for which it is suitable.

Equipment has to be maintained in an efficient state, in good working order and a good state of repair. Maintenance logs should be planned and kept up-to-date.

Measures should be taken to ensure that maintenance can be carried out without exposing persons to risks to their health or safety.

An inspection is required for work equipment when it has been installed or assembled in a new location. An assessment must be made of all other work equipment to determine what level of inspection is needed and how often. The minimum inspection regime should be set by the owner/supplier of the equipment based on manufacturer's information and other statutory obligations. Additional inspections will be identified by the user of the equipment.

Employers should provide adequate information, instruction and training to users of machinery and, where necessary, provide comprehensible written instructions for use, covering methods and conditions of use; abnormal conditions and details of conclusions drawn from previous experience.

Appropriate specific training for example should be provided to all drivers of self-propelled work equipment and all operators of chain saws.

Whenever use of equipment is likely to involve specific risks, use must be restricted to designated, trained users. Only designated, trained personnel may carry out repairs, maintenance or servicing etc. Suitable training records should be kept of all users and maintainers of work equipment.

All equipment must comply with Regulations implementing relevant EU Directives, and if purchased or provided for use after 31.12.94, must carry CE marking to show that it complies.

Guarding of Dangerous Parts of Machinery
Regulation 11 requires that effective measures are taken to protect dangerous parts of machinery, so as to prevent access or danger to the user.

The following hierarchy of control is given:
- fixed guards
- other guards or protection devices
- protection appliances (e.g. push stick)
Key Action Steps

- Ensure new and second hand mobile work equipment complies with requirements now and develop a programme to upgrade existing equipment by 5.12.2002.
- Ensure that all dangerous parts of machinery are adequately guarded to prevent access to dangerous parts.
- Check to ensure that work equipment is adequately protected against other hazards and that lighting is suitable and sufficient.
- Implement regular maintenance procedures by authorised personnel. Maintain a log. Develop inspection programmes where required.
- Provide adequate information, instruction and training to persons operating and maintaining machinery. Ensure mobile equipment drivers and chain saw operators receive adequate training.
- Ensure that adequate warning signs are clearly visible.
- Ensure provision of sufficient start, stop and emergency stop controls.
- Ensure that machinery, where applicable, carries the CE mark.

Reference Documents

  - Safe use of work equipment - L22
  - Safe use of power presses - L112
  - Safe use of Woodworking Machinery - L114
  - Simple guide to the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 INDG 291

Available from HSE Books.

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Power Presses