

## Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

## Cleaning industry - Equipment use

### How can using equipment be a problem?

Workers in the cleaning industry may need to operate a variety of equipment, including items such as vacuum cleaners, floor scrubbers, floor polishers and rubbish compactors. When using equipment, it is important to consider the risks associated with its use, for example:

- contact with moving parts
- the safety of the power source (usually electricity)
- the risk of fire or explosion
- noise or vibration
- whether any air contaminants or fumes will be generated during the use of the equipment/process
- stability of the equipment

### Some possible solutions for equipment issues

Managing the risks from equipment use involves ensuring that the right equipment is selected for the task, the equipment is maintained in a safe condition and safe work practices are used. Some solutions might include:

- using wheelie bins or industrial bins in place of compactors
- checking that compactors have an interlock system to keep operators isolated
- guarding any moving parts (e.g. belts and pulleys) to prevent any operator contact
- only purchasing equipment that meets Australian Standards

- only using equipment for its intended purpose (e.g. not using dry vacuum cleaners in wet areas)
- keeping all equipment clean and in good working order
- checking equipment for faults prior to each use
- not using faulty equipment - tag it and remove it from service until repaired
- following the manufacturer's instructions for use, maintenance and cleaning
- training and supervision of all users in the correct use of the equipment, including supervisors-make a note of any training provided
- ensuring there is enough space to safely operate, store and clean equipment
- switching off and disconnecting the power supply from any machinery when not in use, particularly if left unattended
- positioning any cords out of walkways and away from possible damage
- displaying appropriate warning signs
- replacing or repairing equipment that becomes too noisy, or vibrates
- limiting the length of use of noisy equipment and providing hearing protective devices (ear muffs or plugs)

For more information on managing equipment hazards and risk and other workplace health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit [www.worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au)

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