

## Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

## Dry cleaning and laundry industry - Plant and equipment

### Plant and equipment can be harmful

Any machine that has exposed parts has the potential to harm. Many machines in dry cleaners and laundries have exposed parts, including:

- washers and dryers with exposed belt drives (usually at the back of the machine)
- flatwork ironers with open tops exposing the rollers and elements
- washers and dryers that can be opened before they have stopped spinning
- conveyors with pulleys and rollers that people can touch.

Many pieces of equipment and machinery in dry cleaners and laundries also have hot surfaces that can cause burns (e.g. irons). Steam may also be released from pipes and equipment, resulting in serious burns.

### What can be done to prevent injuries from plant and equipment?

There are a number of things that can be done to prevent people being injured by dangerous parts of machinery, for example:

- all dangerous parts of machinery should be guarded to prevent access to them
- equipment should be fitted with emergency stop buttons so a machine can be shut off quickly in an emergency
- safe work procedures should be implemented for each piece of equipment
- everyone using equipment should be trained in how to use it safely
- all equipment should be serviced and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions

- equipment should be shut down and isolated (to prevent it being re-started) during maintenance, repair or cleaning
- after maintenance, repairs or cleaning, all guards should be reinstalled before the machine is allowed back in service
- equipment should be positioned in a location where people can safely operate, clean and maintain it
- all equipment should be on a solid foundation to make sure it is stable and secured against movement.

Some examples of equipment that should be guarded include:

#### Washers/dryers

- doors of washers and dryers should be fitted with an interlock device that prevents the door being opened while it is still spinning, and prevents the machine from starting if the door is open
- belt drives on washers and dryers should have guards covering them
- any pipes feeding steam to these machines should be insulated to prevent burns and securely mounted to prevent fatigue cracking.

#### Flatwork/roller ironers

- guards should be installed to prevent people reaching into the ironer and contacting moving rollers or hot parts
- guards should be installed across the front of the machine to prevent people contacting the feed rollers while they are moving.

### **Conveyors/monorail systems**

- guards should be installed on conveyors to prevent workers contacting nip or entanglement points (usually between the belt and pulleys or rollers)
- guards should be installed on monorail systems to prevent people getting fingers, other body parts or clothing caught between the track and rollers.

### **Ironing presses**

- guards or control systems (e.g. two-handed controls) should be installed to prevent people getting their hands caught between the ironing surfaces.

These are just some examples of how dry cleaning and laundry equipment can be harmful to people. Steps should be taken to identify all risks that plant and equipment may present and implement appropriate controls to protect people against these identified risks.

For more information on plant and equipment and general obligations 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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