



نظام الشارقة للسلامة والصحة المهنية  
Occupational Safety & Health Sharjah

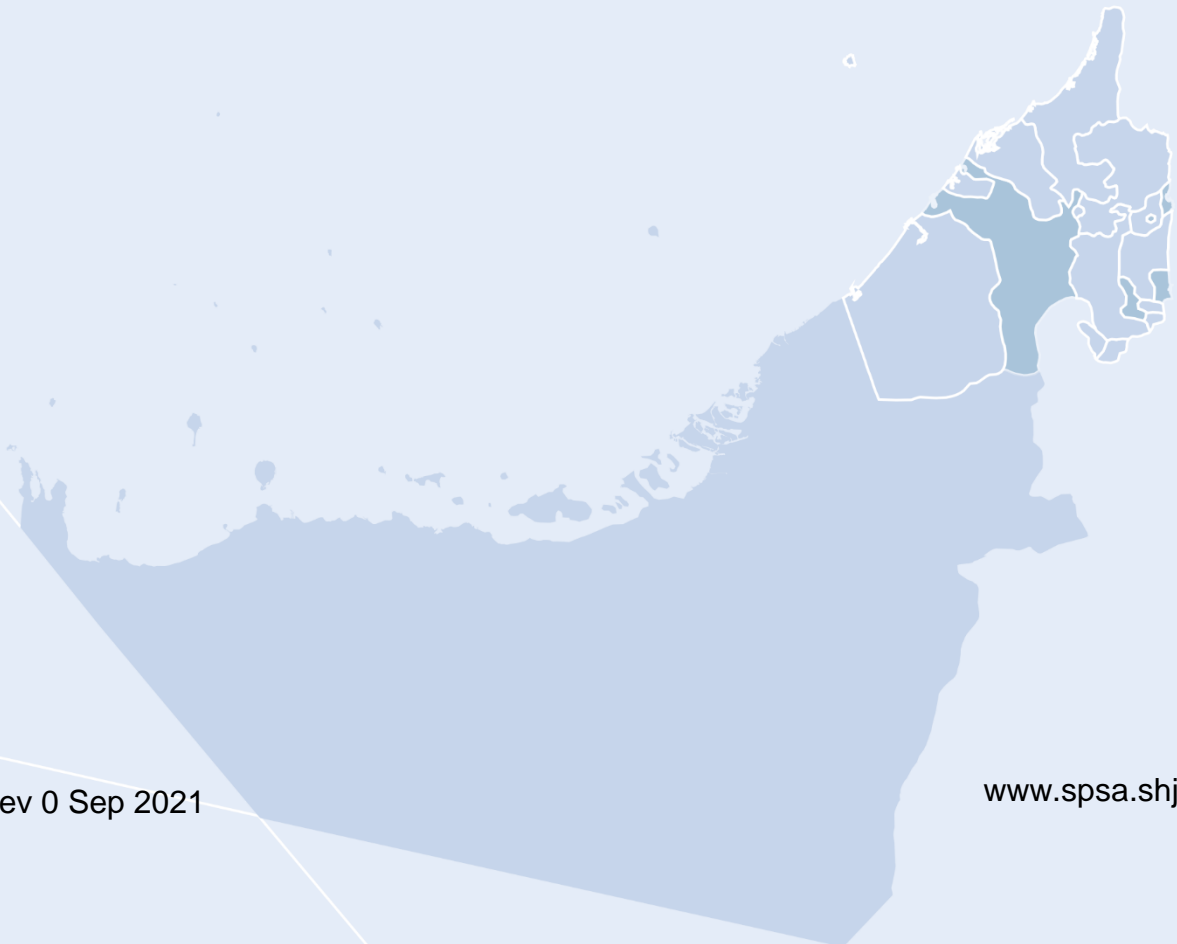
حكومة الشارقة  
هيئة الوقاية والسلامة  
Government of Sharjah  
Prevention And Safety Authority



# Guideline

## Managing Buildings Safety

### OSHJ-GL-21



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## 1 Introduction

Building safety is a broad term that includes building management and the maintenance of its facilities which could include maintenance of fire alarm systems, lifts, cleaning - both internal and external, and other facilities within a building. Each building is different, therefore both the building owner and those responsible for building management should work together to identify the building safety requirements for a particular building.

## 2 Purpose and Scope

This Guideline document has been developed to provide information to entities to assist them in complying with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah.

To achieve compliance in the Emirate of Sharjah, all entities are required to demonstrate a standard of compliance which is equal to or higher than the minimum acceptable requirements outlined in this Guideline document.

## 3 Definitions and Abbreviations

<b>Entities:</b>	Government Entities: Government departments, authorities or establishments and the like in the Emirate.  Private Entities: Establishments, companies, enterprises and economic activities operating in the Emirate in general.
<b>Risk:</b>	Is the combination of likelihood of the hazard causing the loss and the severity of that loss (consequences).
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	The systematic identification of workplace hazards and evaluation of the risks associated. This process takes existing control measures into account and identifies and recommends further control measures where required.
<b>Hazard:</b>	Anything that has the potential to cause harm or loss (injury, disease, ill-health, property damage etc).
<b>Building:</b>	An enclosed construction over a plot of land, having a roof, walls and usually windows and often more than one level, used for commercial and residential purposes.
<b>Occupant:</b>	A person or people that live, visit or work in a building.
<b>AMAN:</b>	An advanced fire detection system allows 24-hour monitoring of fire alarms, boosting the capability of Sharjah's General Directorate of Civil Defence to immediately respond to fire incidents, Aman system can be installed in commercial, government, and all buildings which are not classified as Independent private homes and villas for residential purpose.
<b>Manufacturer's Manual:</b>	The instructions, procedures and recommendations provided by the manufacturer to ensure the safe operation, maintenance and repair of the equipment.



## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 Managing Building Responsibilities

- Undertake risk assessments, identify hazards and implement control measures that manage risks to occupants, employees, contractors, visitors and others;
- Ensure employees that are managing the building have the relevant information, instruction, supervision and training to manage building risks on a day to day basis;
- Perform regular inspections to check that safety and health control measures have been implemented and remain appropriate and effective;
- Provide adequate resources to manage safety and health;
- Develop and implement emergency preparedness and response procedures to deal effectively with emergencies including fire, utility disruptions, etc.

### 4.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Not endanger themselves or others;
- Follow precautionary control measures to ensure work activities associated with managing buildings are performed safely and without risk to health;
- Cooperate with the entity and receive safety information, instruction, supervision and training;
- Report any activity or defect relating to the managing building which they know is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or that of any other person.

### 4.3 Occupant Responsibilities

- Not engage in activities that could endanger themselves or others;
- Report any unsafe acts or conditions that could affect the safety and health of occupants;
- Respond to fire alarms, evacuate promptly and follow instructions from emergency response personnel.

## 5 Guidelines

This guideline document provides safety measures for building safety where potential hazards to building occupants exist.

### 5.1 Risk Assessment

The entity/individual responsible for managing buildings should ensure hazards relating to building safety should be identified through the use of risk assessment, which shall take into consideration the following factors, including but not limited to:

- The size, distribution and location of the building;
- Access and egress to the building, including leisure facilities, communal areas and car parking areas;

- Contractors conducting maintenance or construction activities;
- The purpose and use of the building, and the nature of the activities being undertaken in the building;
- The potential of use or storage of hazardous substances;
- Emergency planning and preparedness.

Further information on risk assessment can be found in OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control.

## 5.2 Safe Access and Egress

Safe access to and egress from buildings are fundamental to the provision of a safe place to work or live, this includes the common areas such as car parking areas and external areas, including; roads, paths, lighting, waste storage areas, entrance doors, reception areas, corridors, staircases and lifts. They should be:

- Adequately maintained and not introduce additional risks that could affect the safety and health of occupants;
- In good condition, well lit and free from obstruction;
- Regularly checked to ensure they remain in good condition;
- Free from slipping and tripping hazards, and have arrangements in place to prevent falls with sufficient lighting in normal conditions, in addition to the provision of emergency lighting;
- Accessible for people of determination and the elderly, where such measures are not inbuilt, special arrangements should be made to allow adequate access and egress for people of determination and the elderly;
- Accessible by emergency services.

All access and egress routes must comply with UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice.

## 5.3 Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)

HVAC system is an assembly of various types of equipment installed together to provide heating and cooling along with indoor climate control to provide comfort to the occupants of buildings or to preserve goods, products or items placed in the building. The entity responsible for managing buildings should ensure:

- Building is installed with adequate HVAC systems depending on the type and use of the building;
- Building is adequately ventilated with fresh clean air which should be drawn and filtered from a source which is not contaminated by fumes, gases, dust, smells or chemicals;
- HVAC systems are regularly inspected and maintained.

Records of HVAC inspection and maintenance shall be recorded and retained.

## 5.4 Traffic Management

A well designed and maintained building should have suitable arrangements for traffic management, including but not limited to:

- Vehicle routes are segregated from walkways;
- Where walkways and vehicle traffic routes cross, they should be clearly marked to direct people to the appropriate crossing points;
- Separate entrances and exits are provided for vehicles and people;
- Routes are clearly marked and have adequate signage;
- Speed limit and directional signs are placed in visible areas;
- Blind spots and sharp corners are adequately managed;
- Speed bumps are clearly marked and have signs;
- Traffic routes are maintained in good condition;
- Parking areas should be clearly indicated and there should be separate parking areas for commercial and private vehicles;
- Where identified as a result of risk assessment and where the parking design is suitable, reverse parking may be required to assist drivers to leave the parking area quickly.
- The provision of designated areas where commercial vehicles can be loaded and unloaded.

## 5.5 Lighting

Lighting should be sufficient to enable people use building facilities and move from place to place safely, including but not limited to:

- Stairs should be well lit in such a way that shadows are not cast over the main part of the treads;
- Where necessary, local lighting should be provided at places of particular risk such as crossing points for people on vehicular traffic routes;
- Evacuation routes must be well lit at all times and be provided with emergency lighting;
- All lighting should be adequately maintained.

Further information on lighting can be found in OSHJ-CoP-15: Employee Welfare and Wellbeing.

### 5.5.1 Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting system enables occupants to safely evacuate a building by illuminating its escape routes, corridors and stairways, and also the location of fire-fighting equipment.

Emergency lighting should:

- Be provided where sudden loss of light would present a serious risk;
- Be powered by a source independent from that of normal lighting. It should be immediately effective in the event of failure of the normal lighting, without need for action by anyone;
- Installed emergency lighting should meet the requirements of the UAE Fire and Life Code of Practice;
- Provide sufficient light for people to take any action necessary to ensure their safety and health;
- Be regularly inspected and maintained.

## 5.6 Transparent or Translucent Doors, Gates, Walls and Windows

Windows, transparent or translucent surfaces in walls, partitions, doors and gates should, where necessary for reasons of safety and health, be made of safety materials or be protected against breakage, including but not limited to:

- If there is a danger of people coming into contact with transparent or translucent surfaces, they shall be marked or incorporate features to make it apparent that it is not a designated walkway or route;
- Openable windows, skylights and ventilators should be capable of being opened, closed or adjusted without exposing anyone to risks of safety and health;
- Openable windows shall not create a gap of more than 125 (one hundred and twenty five) millimetres from the wall, when opened;
- Children, where permitted, in the workplace shall never be left unattended or unsupervised near openable windows, railings or on balconies or terraces;
- Windows and skylights shall be designed so they may be cleaned without risk to safety and health;
- Doors and gates should be suitably constructed and fitted with safety devices if necessary. Doors and gates which swing both ways and conventionally hinged doors on designated walkways or routes shall have a transparent viewing panel;
- Power operated doors and gates shall have safety features to prevent people being struck or trapped and, where necessary, shall have a readily identifiable and accessible control switch or device so that they can be stopped quickly in an emergency;
- Glass safety stickers, or glass manifestations, are designed to highlight glazed areas so that they stand out visually with the background, therefore reducing the risk of collision
- Installed windows, transparent or translucent surfaces in walls, partitions, doors and gates should meet the requirements of UAE Fire and Life Code of Practice.

## 5.7 Electrical Rooms

Electrical rooms should be managed to ensure, including but not limited to:

- They are secured from unauthorised entry;

- They have signs forbidding unauthorised persons to enter;
- Access only by authorised personnel;
- Are fitted with smoke detectors and suitable firefighting equipment;
- They are regularly inspected and maintained by competent persons.

Further information on electricity can be found in OSHJ-CoP-05: Electrical Safety at Work.

## 5.8 Escalators

Escalators should have, including but not limited to:

- Up to date inspection logs and reports and, where required, tags/stickers displayed on the escalator;
- Regular maintenance and servicing as recommended by the manufacturer's manual but at a minimum monthly;
- Thorough examination at least every 6 months by a competent inspection body or more frequently if required;
- Sensors to trigger automatic shutdown if a component is outside of its normal position;
- Skirt brushes to help prevent objects from being caught in the escalator;
- Emergency stop buttons;
- Controlled stop braking;
- Understep lighting;
- Yellow comb fingers;
- Handrail guards.

## 5.9 Elevators

Elevators should have, including but not limited to:

- Up to date inspection logs and reports and, where required, tags/stickers displayed on the elevator;
- Regular maintenance and servicing as recommended by the manufacturer's manual, but at a minimum monthly;
- Thorough examination at least every 6 months by a competent inspection body or more frequently if required;
- Safe load information signs;
- Safety brakes/emergency landing device;
- Door sensors;
- Door closing devices;



- Hoist way door interlocks;
- Hoist way safety switches;
- Emergency evacuation feature;
- Pit buffers;
- Emergency alarm switches;
- Emergency landing device;
- Emergency telephones or communications devices;
- Emergency lighting;
- Emergency power;
- Fire emergency systems;
- Displayed emergency numbers;
- Meet the requirements of the UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice.

### **5.10 Hazardous Substances**

Where hazardous substances exist as a necessary part of building operations they should be managed in accordance with OSHJ-CoP-11: Management of Hazardous Substances.

### **5.11 Pest Control**

The entity/individual responsible should make provision for the control of pests and should appoint a licenced pest control entity to manage pest control on their behalf. The entity/individual responsible should supervise the pest control entity to ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- The application of any chemicals are controlled;
- Pest control is applied when occupants are not present;
- The treated areas are isolated to prevent access;
- The treated areas are adequately ventilated, where required;
- A competent person assesses that the premises are safe for occupants to re-enter after application of pest control chemicals.

The entity should record and retain pest control records.

### **5.12 Waste Management**

The entity/individual responsible for managing buildings should have a process in place for waste management and the disposal of waste and should consider the requirements of the relevant authorities. In general the entity/individual responsible for managing buildings should have processes on how waste is:

- Collected;

- Segregated;
- Stored;
- Transported.

Further information on waste management can be found in OSHJ-CoP-19: Waste Management.

### 5.13 Safety Signage

Where significant risks exist in a building there should be suitable signs prominently placed and appropriately maintained. Safety signage must be provided in Arabic, English languages and other relevant languages as a minimum.

Further information on safety signage can be found in OSHJ-GL-17: Safety Signs and Signals.

### 5.14 Smoking Areas

Smoking should only be permitted in designated smoking areas, preferably outside of the building. The designated smoking areas shall, including but not limited to:

- Be ventilated;
- Have signage indicating 'smoking area';
- Be positioned a sufficient distance away from air ducts;
- Be provided with special smoking bins.

### 5.15 Leisure Facilities

The entity/individual responsible for managing buildings should ensure all leisure facilities, including but not limited to; gymnasiums, swimming pools and play areas are safe, hygienic, regularly inspected, repaired and maintained.

The entity/individual responsible for managing buildings should have arrangements for registering the details of visitors to leisure facilities.

#### 5.15.1 Gymnasiums

Gymnasium sports equipment shall be safe for people to use and include the provision of safety signage and instructions on use of sports appliances, equipment and tools.

Equipment must be installed, inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's manual.

Gymnasiums must be, including but not limited to:

- Provided with disinfectants for the use by the gymnasium users after and before using the equipment;
- Provided with separate changing areas for male and female users;
- Access for children must be restricted;
- Regularly cleaned and maintained in good condition.

### 5.15.2 Swimming Pools

Where available, swimming pools shall, including but not limited to:

- Be regularly inspected and maintained;
- Have safety instructions provided in Arabic, English and other relevant languages which are visible to users;
- Hotels and recreational facilities must provide lifeguards that have a current rescue certification during swimming pool opening times;
- Residential buildings are recommended to provide lifeguards that have a current rescue certification for each swimming pool during opening times;
- The number of lifeguards shall depend on the size of the pool and the visibility for the lifeguard of the area of the pool from the location where the lifeguard is based, including:
  - If the swimming pool is used by female occupants only, then the lifeguard must be female;
  - If the swimming pool is used by both male and female occupants, there should be a minimum of one female lifeguard.
- Be equipped with safety equipment;
- Be provided with separate male and female; clean and hygienic toilets, changing rooms and shower facilities;
- Segregation and identification of pool area for safe use for children;
- The depth of the pool marked;
- Pool access door to be controlled to restrict access when not in use
- Be secured and access restricted, when not in use.

### 5.15.3 Play Areas

Play areas shall be constructed of suitable materials to ensure the safety of children using the play area equipment.

Play areas and equipment shall be clean and hygienic and maintained as per the manufacturer's manual.

Play equipment shall be regularly inspected and maintained by a competent person or third party, where required.

### 5.16 Maintenance

The main goal of building maintenance is to manage the building and its facilities to ensure they are safe for use. What is included in building maintenance varies from building to building, therefore those responsible for building management should identify a plan for their building maintenance.

Areas that require maintenance, include but not limited to:

- Firefighting, fire detection and emergency lighting systems;
- Electrical systems;
- Elevators, escalators and other lifting equipment;
- General landscaping;
- HVAC systems;
- Plumbing and other water systems;
- General cleaning, including outdoor and building façade cleaning.

The entity/individual responsible for managing buildings shall record and retain maintenance records.

## 6 Training

The entity/individual responsible for managing buildings shall provide training in languages and in a format that employees understand, including but not limited to:

- How to assess risks specific to work activities;
- How to meet their safety and health roles and responsibilities;
- How to respond to emergencies;
- How to report safety and health issues to the building owner;
- How to conduct regular evacuation drills.

Where first-aiders and Fire Wardens are available they shall have a valid certificate of training issued from a recognised training provider. First aid and Fire Warden training shall be refreshed:

- Upon expiry of the training certificate issued by the training provider; or
- As a minimum within two years of issue of the training certificate.

Periodic refresher training should be conducted to ensure employees competency is maintained, including but not limited to:

- Where training certification has expired;
- Where identified as part of a training needs analysis;
- Where risk assessment findings identify training as a measure to control risks;
- Where there is a change in legal requirements;
- Where incident investigation findings recommend refresher training.

The entity must record and maintain accurate training records of OSH training provided to employees.

Further information on training can be found in OSHJ-GL-26: Training and Competence.

## 7 Emergency Preparedness and Response

A building specific emergency plan shall be developed and implemented. Emergency preparedness and response shall aim to minimise the effect of an incident both inside and outside of buildings.

It requires the prompt application of defined procedures by the entity/individual responsible for managing safety and employees with adequate training and resources. For this to happen, plans and procedures specific to the building must have been developed, documented and tested prior to the occurrence of an emergency.

An emergency plan should aim to prevent, limit and manage the effects of the consequences on people, environment and property.

Further information on emergency preparedness and response can be found in OSHJ-CoP-18: Emergency Preparedness and Response.

### 7.1 Fire Safety

The entity/individual responsible for managing safety shall ensure that the requirements of Sharjah Civil Defence and AMAN are implemented and maintained, including but not limited to:

- Building access and egress including doors, passageways and stairs are not obstructed at any time when a building is occupied;
- Prominently displayed evacuation layouts of the premises showing the location of evacuation routes, fire fighting equipment, first aid equipment, electricity, gas and water service lines;
- Fire extinguishers are serviced and maintained at least once per year;
- Exit signs, directional signs and evacuation plans are free from damage, wear and tear and in a visible location;
- Emergency lights are functional and located appropriately;
- Fire detection and alarm systems are inspected and maintained;
- Fire protection systems are inspected and maintained;
- Full records of inspection and maintenance of fire and life safety systems are available;
- Inspection stickers/tags placed on equipment are up to date;
- Emergency evacuation drills are conducted periodically to familiarise the building occupants in evacuation procedures;
- Employees shall be trained on emergency preparedness and response, as per the requirements of the UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice;
- The building fire alarm system is connected to Sharjah Civil Defence through the AMAN system.

## 7.2 First Aid

Where buildings are used by the public, such as shopping malls or any other leisure facilities, they shall provide trained first-aiders with a valid certificate of training issued from a recognised training provider.

Further information on first aid facilities can be found in OSHJ-CoP-16: First Aid at Work.

## 7.3 Incidents

The emergency plan should clearly set out how to respond, investigate and report on incidents arising from managing buildings and incidents happening within buildings and should include the following, but is not limited to:

- A procedure to follow in the event of an incident, including the administration of first aid, calling for emergency services and contacting families of injured persons;
- A procedure for recording and retaining information on all incidents;
- A procedure for the reporting of incidents internally;
- A procedure for reporting of incidents externally to SPSA and other relevant authorities.

Further information on incident reporting can be found in OSHJ-CoP-17: Incident Reporting and Investigation.

## 8 References

OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control

OSHJ-CoP-05: Electrical Safety at Work

OSHJ-CoP-11: Management of Hazardous Substances

OSHJ-CoP-15: Employee Welfare and Wellbeing.

OSHJ-CoP-16: First Aid at Work

OSHJ-CoP-17: Incident Reporting and Investigation

OSHJ-CoP-18: Emergency Preparedness and Response

OSHJ-CoP-19: Waste Management

OSHJ-GL-17: Safety Signs and Signals

OSHJ-GL-26: Training and Competence

UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice

## 9 Document Amendment Record

<b>TITLE</b>	Managing Buildings Safety		
<b>DOCUMENT AMENDMENT RECORD</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Amendment Details</b>	<b>Pages Affected</b>
1	15 SEP 2021	New Document	N/A