

Safety Checklist

Every businessperson intends to operate a safe and compliant work place. This checklist is designed to help owners, brewers and managers of microbreweries, brewpubs, and distilleries assess their own level of safety and compliance.

- Are you sure that you are complying with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) brewer regulations including those relating to injury reporting, hazard communication, confined space entry, grain handling, lockout/tagout, protective equipment, machine guarding, and hearing conservation?
- Have you asked your staff whether they feel safe? You may be surprised to find out how concerned about safety they truly are. Prioritize your immediate needs and begin taking steps to improve safety. Involve all levels of staff. Reducing the risk of injuries can improve employee morale, retention and productivity.
- Do your employees wearing splash goggles or face shields, rubber boots, chemical protective gloves, and hearing protection when hazards call for them?
- Do you use engineering controls such as clean in place (CIP) systems, tanks without man-sized entryways, fixed railings, insulation on steam and coolant lines, gripping surfaces on platforms and stairs, plastic safety shields around a bottle filter or labeler, good ventilation in fermenting rooms, guards on augers and mixers?
- Are your employees regularly trained on safe work practices?
- Are your employees trained to recognize and appropriately address situations in which patrons become intoxicated? Are these situations always documented so that the facts are clear even if a claim is made months or years after the event?
- Did you know that the safest first step toward extinguishing a fire is NOT to try to extinguish it yourself? These first 3 steps should be well known to all staff: 1) sound a local alarm with either a pull box or shouting "Fire", 2) sound a remote alarm or dial 911, 3) fight the fire with readily available extinguishers if equipment and training permit.
- Do you know if the town, city or county in which your business is located requires a wastewater permit?
- How would you rate the housekeeping in your facility? Transfer hoses lying about, hand tools set on stairs, power cords running to portable equipment, unplacarded vessels, and unlabeled containers have been known to lead to slips, falls, electrocution, asphyxiation, and chemical burns. Also, the physical appearance of an operation often makes an important first impression on an OSHA inspector.
- Do you utilize proper engineering controls, such as pressure relief valves and rupture disks, to prevent tanks from becoming over or under-pressurized?

For more information about safety, please call the Whalen Insurance Agency at 413 586-1000 or visit www.breweryinsurance.com.

