



SAFETY, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL FACT SHEET



WORKPLACE TEMPERATURES

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 lay down particular requirements for most aspects of the working environment. Regulation 7 of these Regulations deals specifically with the temperature in indoor workplaces and states that:

- During working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings shall be reasonable.

However, the application of the regulation depends on the nature of the workplace i.e. a bakery, a cold store, an office, a warehouse. The temperature in workrooms should provide reasonable comfort without the need for special clothing. Where such a temperature is impractical because of hot or cold processes, all reasonable steps should be taken to achieve a temperature which is as close as possible to comfortable. 'Workroom' means a room where people normally work for more than short periods.

The temperature in workrooms should normally be at least 16 degrees Celsius unless much of the work involves severe physical effort in which case the temperature should be at least 13 degrees Celsius. These temperatures may not, however, ensure reasonable comfort, depending on other factors such as air movement and relative humidity.

Where the temperature in a workroom would otherwise be uncomfortably high, for example because of hot processes or the design of the building, all reasonable steps should be taken to achieve a reasonably comfortable temperature, for example by:

- Insulating hot plants or pipes;
- Providing air-cooling plant;
- Shading windows;
- Siting workstations away from places subject to radiant heat.

Where a reasonably comfortable temperature cannot be achieved throughout a workroom, local cooling should be provided. In extremely hot weather fans and increased ventilation may be used instead of local cooling.

Where, despite the provision of local cooling, workers are exposed to temperatures which do not give reasonable comfort, suitable protective clothing and rest facilities should be provided. Where practical there should be systems of work (for example, task rotation) to ensure that the length of time for which individual workers are exposed to uncomfortable temperatures is limited.

Disclaimer: The above information is given in good faith and is a brief summary of more detailed information. No liability is accepted for any inaccuracies in respect of information provided without charge. Clients should seek specific advice on any Safety, Health and Environmental matter that might affect them.