

Car parking

Workplace transport site safety information sheet WPT09

This information will be useful to anyone who uses workplace transport or who works where it is used. It will help employers, managers and supervisors to assess their workplace and make improvements. The checklists will help you to prepare your risk assessment.

There are two information sheets in this series relating to parking. This sheet addresses car parking and relates to issues such as parking management, travel plan measures and site congestion – essentially, staff car parking. *Lorry, van and delivery vehicle parking* WPT13 addresses the safe parking of site vehicles.

Well-planned and laid out car parking areas, with effective car parking management measures, can greatly reduce the risk of transport-related workplace accidents. It can also reduce congestion and car parking problems.

Common problems

Over-parking and site congestion: Your car parking area may be too small. Cars will have to park so that they block each other in and cannot park within designated, marked-out spaces. Difficult and dangerous manoeuvres may be required during parking. Cars may block pedestrian routes or obstruct vehicle routes, creating 'pinch points'. Cars can get scratched or bumped by passing vehicles.

Your car parking problems may relate to the way the spaces are laid out and how they are used.

Lack of properly segregated and clearly marked parking areas: A badly organised car parking area is dangerous. It presents safety problems due to the lack of areas clearly marked out for pedestrians. If the car park is not clearly marked it encourages people to park cars in a haphazard way, which can lead to routes being blocked and reduced visibility.

Carelessly parked cars can reduce visibility for drivers and pedestrians: If cars are parked in places that are not allocated car parking spaces, they can block sight lines and reduce visibility. They can also block visibility for pedestrians and block footpaths. This could lead to people having to walk around a parked car and into the path of a vehicle.



Photo Jackie Stevens

Lack of safe, segregated routes from car park to workplace: It is important to have safe, well-marked routes for pedestrians to follow from the parking area to the workplace. If these are not provided, people might walk between cars and walk onto vehicle routes.

You might have a car parking area which is too small: You may not have enough car parking spaces for your employees.

Security concerns relating to car crime: If the car parking area is not secure, staff and visitors may be worried about car crime. Fear of crime may encourage them to park their cars where they can see them as they work, rather than in a designated space.

Checklist – what to look out for

- Over-parking and site congestion.
- Lack of properly segregated and clearly marked out parking areas.
- Carelessly parked vehicles that reduce visibility for drivers and pedestrians, or force pedestrians onto vehicle routes.
- Lack of safe, segregated routes from car park to workplace.
- Not enough car parking spaces available.
- Security concerns relating to car crime.

How can you deal with common problems?

Make sure parking areas are clearly marked out and segregated from areas where there are pedestrians: The

type of parking area required will depend on what vehicles are used at the workplace (including visiting vehicles), where they go and what they are used for. Parking areas should be separated from areas where pedestrians walk or work. This is the case whether vehicles are parked in a 'car parking area' or whether they are parked up for unloading.

Identify a safe parking area and encourage safe parking practices: Where you can, provide parking areas for all vehicles using the workplace – that is for work-related vehicles and for private cars, motorcycles and pedal cycles. When drivers enter an area where parking is controlled, you should clearly tell them that they may only park in allowed places and how they can recognise these areas. Where parking is controlled throughout the site, you should give this information at the site entrance.

Parking areas should be in safe and suitable locations and:

- be clearly signposted and marked out;
- have safe walking areas;
- be firm;
- be level;
- be well lit; and
- not be slippery.

Where possible, design parking areas so that only simple manoeuvres are needed for cars to park and leave. You should always try to avoid the need for reversing.

Introduce a 'travel plan' to reduce car use: If you don't have enough car parking spaces for your employees, you could introduce a 'travel plan' – a package of measures put together to reduce the number of people who travel to work, by themselves, in a car. Measures include encouraging cycling, walking and car sharing. A combination of measures properly implemented can reduce the number of people who drive to the site to work and therefore reduce the number of car parking spaces required.

Checklist

- Introduce car parking management and travel plan measures.
- Make sure there is a safe, well-lit pedestrian route from the car park to the site (especially if the car park is separate to the rest of the site).
- Try and make sure that, where possible, parking areas are:
 - level, firm, well lit and clearly laid out with safe walking areas;
 - easy to find; and
 - as close as possible to where people need to go when they leave their vehicles.
- Make sure staff and visitors are aware of safe site practices relating to parking.

Checking your site

Carry out a visual inspection of your site to look for problems with car parking. Walk around the premises, make notes and



Photo Jackie Stevens

take photographs. Mark the problem areas on a site plan. Look for:

- where people are parking vehicles, whether they are formally parked in bays or informally parked, and whether they are staff or visitor vehicles or delivery vehicles;
- any existing areas marked out for parking and think about how clear, appropriate and safe they are;
- whether parking areas are on level ground, well lit, and clearly marked out and signed; and
- marked out routes between parking areas for pedestrians.

Consider inspecting the site at different times of the day and in different weather conditions, eg when it has been raining, to see if markings are still visible.

The plan and photographs can be used as a reference when you are back in your office and assessing the whole area. Be especially aware of areas where 'near misses' or accidents have been reported, or where there is a high level of pedestrian or vehicle movement.

If there is an existing parking system in operation on your site you must: assess how effective it is at encouraging safe site practices; and assess whether parking areas can be extended or improved.

It might be useful to go through the *Site inspection: Workplace transport checklist* to examine your parking practices and parking areas – see www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport.

Checklist

- Carry out a visual inspection of your site and make a note of where there are car parking problems.
- Pay for a professional inspection or survey if you feel you cannot do this properly yourself.
- Check for areas where the markings are worn or where there aren't any markings.
- Speak to your staff and ask what car parking problems they encounter and what problems they encounter with parked cars.

Where to get help

If parking is a significant problem, a full survey of parking demand and availability might be appropriate. You may need the support of professional engineers.

If the problem relates to refreshing the white lining within your site and making sure that staff only park in allocated spaces, you will be able to carry out the work yourself.

You can also get advice by speaking to other similar local businesses – look for examples of good practice. Contact your local trade association or Chamber of Commerce for recommended local suppliers or look in the *Yellow Pages*.

Checklist

- If you identify a problem with parking on your site you will need to reconsider your parking areas.
- Consider how parking areas are marked out and how vehicles are segregated from pedestrians. You may also need to reassess working practices and site operation.
- Can you fix the problem yourself or do you need professional help?
- Speak to your health and safety representative and talk to your staff.

What might it cost?

- Segregation road markings to show footways between parking areas £500–£1000.
- White lining of a car parking area to park ten cars £500.

(These costs are a guide and may vary for individual sites and circumstances.)

Find out more

Workplace transport safety: An overview Leaflet INDG199(rev1) HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 5 ISBN 978 0 7176 2821 6)
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg199.pdf

Workplace transport safety: An employers' guide HSG136 (Second edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 978 0 7176 6154 1

Management of health and safety at work. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L21 (Second edition) HSE Books 2000 ISBN 978 0 7176 2488 1

DfT, DSA *The Official Highway Code* (Revised 2007 edition) The Stationery Office 2007 ISBN 978 0 11 552814 9

Department of Environment *Residential Roads and Footpaths: Layout Considerations* (Second revised edition) Design Bulletin 32 The Stationery Office 1992 ISBN 978 0 11 752641 9

Lorry, van and delivery vehicle parking Workplace Transport Information Sheet WPT13 HSE 2009
www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

The Stationery Office publications are available from The Stationery Office, PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN
 Tel: 0870 600 5522 Fax: 0870 600 5533
 email: customer.services@tso.co.uk
 Website: www.tsoshop.co.uk/ (They are also available from bookshops.) Statutory Instruments can be viewed free of charge at www.legislation.gov.uk/.

This document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

This document is available at:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wpt09.pdf.

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