



## H & S Guidance - Hairdressing and Beauty Salons

### INTRODUCTION

The main hazards found in hairdressing/beauty salons include the use of chemicals, dermatitis, the transmission of infectious diseases (such as HIV and Hepatitis B), the safety of electrical equipment and the use of U/V Tanning Equipment.



### USE OF HAIRDRESSING FORMULATIONS

All cosmetic products used in salons must comply with the Cosmetic Products Regulations 1978, which are enforced by Trading Standards Officers of the County Council.

General Health and Safety advice for the use of such products is as follows:

Follow instructions carefully.

- Never mix products unless recommended by the manufacturers.
- Keep original containers and ensure all containers are properly labelled.
- Good standards of 'housekeeping' and personal hygiene.
- Use of protective clothing where appropriate.
- Don't use on clients with abrasions or irritated scalps.
- Store in a dry place, at or below room temperature.
- Keep away from naked flames (especially aerosols).
- Proper disposal of unused mixtures & empty containers.
- Containers to be sealed when not in use.

Proprietors should give consideration to a No Smoking Policy.

Full and more specific health and safety guidance is available from



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the Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority, 2nd Floor, Fraser House, Nether Hall Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN1 2PH, Tel: 01302 380000.

Some hairdressing products contain substances which are hazardous to health and which have an Occupational Exposure Limit. The concentration of airborne substances will vary with the salon size, ventilation, customer flow, the degree to which product instructions are followed and the level of staff training. In a well run, well-ventilated salon, levels of such substances will probably not exceed Occupational Exposure Limits.

### **DERMATITIS**

Recent studies have demonstrated that hand dermatitis and skin care problems are important occupational health issues in hairdressing.

**Irritant dermatitis** occurs when a substance physically damages the skin. Shampooing can set this off because frequent contact removes the protective oils, thus drying the skin. Fortunately, the effects can be reversible by taking suitable precautions, such as the wearing of gloves.

**Allergic contact dermatitis** is more serious and is irreversible.

It occurs when a person has been exposed to a sensitising agent, possibly over a long period of time before any reaction is noticed.

Sensitising agents include some of the chemicals used in hair preparations. Once sensitised, the allergic reaction occurs extremely quickly when exposed to the substance subsequently.

To avoid contact with sensitising agents it is therefore again important to use gloves and to follow product instructions carefully.

### **SKIN PIERCING**

Beauty salons may offer electrolysis or ear piercing, both of which require registration with the local authority under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and, if appropriate, compliance with byelaws made under the Act. Health and safety considerations are dealt with in more depth in the Skin Piercing element of this manual. In summary, the main requirements are to use suitable equipment, to follow recommended methods, to have good standards of personal and environmental hygiene, to have well-trained operators and to keep



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records of all skin piercing treatments.

### **WAXING**

Hot and warm wax may be used for depilation but it should never be filtered and reused. A disposable spatula should be used to apply the wax to the skin and then discarded. Spatulas should not be put back in the pot of wax once they have been in contact with the skin. There are propriety systems for waxing that remove the risk of contamination of the wax. Good personal hygiene should be observed at all times.

### **HAIRDRESSING**

Solid open razors should not be used, except those with disposable blades. Electric razors should be avoided unless adequate cleansing and sterilisation can be ensured. Clippers, when used, should be properly aligned with the bottom blade in front of the top blade by approx 1/16".

Equipment should be regularly cleansed and sterilised as necessary, e.g. if a client's skin has been cut.

### **ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT**

Advice on the safety of electrical equipment is contained elsewhere in this manual. The range, number and 'portability' of electrical equipment used in salons, together with their proximity to water, make for potentially hazardous situations.

In summary, appropriate precautions would include establishing an electrical equipment register and test/checking system, visual checks by staff, protective devices (including a residual current device fitted to circuits to which portable hand tools are connected) and earth bonding of pipework.

### **ULTRA VIOLET TANNING EQUIPMENT**

In summary, precautions would include the safe construction, installation and maintenance of the equipment, ensuring safe working practices so as to limit client exposure and suitable training of staff. Further details can be found in the Radiation element of this manual.



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## **SLIP AND TRIP HAZARDS**

These may arise from trailing cables, loose hair or liquid spillage. They require either prevention in the first place (trailing cables) or prompt attention should they arise during working.

## **SPACE HEATING**

Any space heaters used should be suitably located and guarded - bear in mind children and clients' clothing.

### **CHECKLIST -**

#### **HAIRDRESSING/BEAUTY SALONS**

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. Have you identified areas of hazardous activity in your premises?  | YES NO |
| 2. Have you carried out risk assessments for each of the hazardous activities?  | YES NO |
| 3.  |        |
| a) COSHH  | YES NO |
| -Have you carried out any assessments required under COSHH 1994?  |        |
| -Do you minimise exposure to hazardous substances through good working practices, good ventilation and staff training?                        | YES NO |
| b) DERMATITIS - Have you taken steps to prevent hand dermatitis, including staff training and the use of suitable gloves/skincare treatments? | YES NO |
| c) SKIN PIERCING  | YES NO |
| -Have you registered any relevant skin piercing with the local council?   |        |
| -Do you meet standards specified in byelaws governing skin piercing?  | YES NO |
| d) WAXING - Are the methods used for waxing such as to prevent the spread of infection?   | YES NO |
| e) HAIRDRESSING - Is equipment so maintained and used to prevent the spread of infection?   | YES NO |
| f) ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT   |        |



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- Do you have a register of all electrical equipment used? YES NO
- Is such equipment subject to a system of user checks and periodic inspection/testing as appropriate and are records kept? YES NO
- Are appropriate protective devices in place in the fixed electrical system? YES NO
- g) U/V TANNING EQUIPMENT - Is there a system in place to ensure safety in the use of such equipment? YES NO

### REFERENCES/FURTHER DETAILS

1. Safety in the Salon (Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority, 2nd Floor, Fraser House, Nether Hall Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN1 2PH, Tel: 01302 380000).
- \*2. A guide to hygienic skin piercing (Public Health Laboratory Service, Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, 1 Colindale Avenue, London, NW9 5EQ).
- \*\*3. Leaflet IND (G) 209. Controlling health risks from the use of U/V Tanning Equipment. (HSE).  
[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg209.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg209.pdf)
4. Health and Safety Implementation Pack for Hairdressers (Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority, 2nd Floor, Fraser House, Nether Hall Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN1 2PH, Tel: 01302 380000).