

Focus on IFA's work

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Web portal: indoor workplaces

Problem

Indoor workplaces are found in a wide variety of working environments. Typical examples are offices, sales areas, hospitals, schools, preschool childcare facilities or libraries. Tasks involving hazardous substances, such as those encountered in a chemical laboratory, are not performed at such workplaces; nor are they high-noise areas, such as workshops.

The complaints of employees at such workplaces are frequently described as sick-building syndrome. Symptoms include burning of the eyes, a scratchy throat, blocked nose, and headaches. These problems often cannot be attributed to a single cause, and require comprehensive analysis.

Factors such as workplace design, room lighting, noise, indoor climate, electromagnetic fields, ionizing radiation, and mental stress factors at work must also be considered, besides the air quality.

Activities

The web portal on indoor workplaces was developed based upon the report "Indoor workplaces – procedure for investigation of the working environment", proven in the field, and in consideration of recent developments.



Web portal on indoor workplaces

Results and Application

The web portal is intended to assist in the systematic investigation of health problems and subjective disorders arising at indoor workplaces, and in the identification of practical solutions. The topics covered include health complaints, buildings, facilities, workplace design, physical, chemical and biological hazards, and mental factors. The various pages on the website supplement the content of the report "Innenraumarbeitsplätze – Vorgehensempfehlung für die Ermittlungen zum Arbeitsumfeld" [Indoor workplaces – procedure for investigation of the working environment] by publishing the latest information as it becomes available.

Available for downloading at the same time are individual investigation sheets on the various subjects as aids to finding the causes of health complaints.

Area of Application

Companies in all sectors, social accident insurance institutions, public authorities, employees and their superiors at office workplaces

Additional Information

- Indoor workplaces
www.dguv.de/webcode/d6274
- von Hahn, N.; Kleine, H.: Innenraumarbeitsplätze – Vorgehensempfehlung für die Ermittlungen zum Arbeitsumfeld. Report der gewerblichen Berufsgenossenschaften, der Unfallversicherungsträger der öffentlichen Hand und des Instituts für Arbeitsschutz der Deutschen Gesetzlichen Unfallversicherung (IFA). Hrsg.: Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung (DGUV), Sankt Augustin 2013
www.dguv.de/webcode/d650356

Expert Assistance

IFA, Division 3: Hazardous substances: handling – protective measures

Literature Requests

IFA, Central Division