

Health, Safety and WorkSafe Alert

Safe Storage

14 February 2012

As per the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) [Workplace Inspection Procedure](#), DEECD workplaces are to establish a program of scheduled workplace inspections to regularly identify, assess and control workplace hazards and to ensure any controls implemented are reviewed for adequacy. This includes checking safe storage of equipment.

Incident:

- A student was injured due to wood being incorrectly stacked against the wall in a woodwork room.
- As a result of the incident the student sustained a broken tibia and fibula bone which protruded out through the skin.
- Due to the nature of the injury a permanent metal rod was placed in the student's leg.
- WorkSafe Victoria conducted an investigation of the incident.

Recommendations:

- Schools should immediately review their storage practices particularly in high risks areas such as wood, automotive, metal, textiles and arts.
- Items should be stored so that they are not protruding into walkways or obstructing aisles, stairs, exits, fire equipment, or first aid areas.
- All storage areas should be clearly marked and frequently used items should be stored between shoulder and knee height.

- Schools are to ensure that hazards that create a housekeeping issue are included in their workplace inspections and documented on the [Workplace Inspection checklists](#).
- Unstable or unbalanced loads that are difficult to grasp or hold thus creating a potential manual handling issue, should be recorded on the [Hazardous Manual Handling Identification Form](#) and then risk assessed using the [Hazardous Manual Handling Risk Management Form](#).

Further Information:

The Department's [Occupational Health and Safety Management System](#) provides policies and procedures for managing OHS including:

- o [OHS Risk Management](#);
- o [Manual Handling](#);
- o [OHS Hazard Management](#); and
- o [Hazard, Incident Reporting and Investigation](#)

For further assistance, contact your [Regional OHS/WorkSafe Advisor](#) or the Department's OHS Advisory Service on **1300 074 715** or email safety@edumail.vic.gov.au
