

Lighting plays an essential role in proactive defence against accidents and injuries in the workplace. When lighting conditions are optimal, it can increase productivity while improving the quality of work.

Optimal lighting provides workers with an environment where they can clearly read labels and instructions, allowing workers to identify tripping hazards and perform tasks at hand safely.

Identifying Lighting Needs

Workplace lighting needs can be identified with workers, both at safety meetings and before tasks begin.

Correcting lighting issues does not always mean adding more light fixtures. Here are some ways to correct insufficient lighting:

- Replace bulbs on a regular schedule. Old bulbs give less light than new ones, so replace them before they burn out. Follow manufacturers' instructions.
- Clean light fixtures regularly. Dirty light fixtures give off less light.
- Paint walls and ceilings with light colours so light can be reflected.
- Use more reflected light and local lighting to eliminate shadows. For example, a covered light mounted under a transparent guard on a grinding wheel provides the added light needed to see clearly.

The amount of lighting needed in the workplace varies. It depends on the tasks being performed, as well as the individuals involved.

Variables include:

- Type of task being done
- Type of surfaces (Does it reflect or absorb light?)
- Individual's vision

Temporary Lighting

When choosing a temporary lighting system, ask some questions about the space:

- How high are the ceilings? Will the light reach the ground?
- How many rooms need light?
- Is it a wet environment?
- Is it an explosive environment?

There are many different types of temporary lighting available to illuminate jobsites. It is important to discuss the lighting product that is needed to find the one best suited to the space being used.

Some of the more popular types of temporary lighting are:

- String/cord lights (stringers)
- Balloon lights
- Floodlights
- Hand lamps
- Wobble lights
- Metal-halide lamps
- Explosion-proof lights



When setting up temporary lighting, some things should be kept in mind:

- When possible, keep temporary lights eight feet off the floor.
- Protect the lightbulbs from breaking or being contacted by installing "bird cages."
- Do not hang lights by their cords unless they are designed to do so.
- Dead, missing or low-watt bulbs, as well as inadequate power and blown fuses, can leave stairwells, basements and other areas poorly lit or with no lighting at all, increasing the risk of injury.
- Ladders, pipes, scaffold frames and other objects can bump stringers, leading to electrical contact and shock. Keep string lights out of doorways as steel door frames can become electrified when doors close on wires.