

TEAM

SAFETY

Handle Glass Safely

The risk of injury from the storage, handling and disposal of glassware or broken glass exists in most workplaces. Broken glass can cause lacerations, cuts, and puncture wounds which may result in severed arteries or tendons, amputations, eye injuries, or exposure to disease.

For situations involving broken glass, workers should know the safe handling procedures, the necessity of proper protective equipment, and the importance of obtaining prompt and effective first aid for injuries.

Workers should know to keep glass containers off machines, work benches, or window sills and off the floor. They should never throw glass, whether broken or whole containers, into open receptacles. There is danger from flying glass resulting from the impact. Glass light fixtures in the workplace should be guarded to prevent accidental breakage.

Approved gloves and eye protection should be worn in environments where glass is handled frequently and where there is the possibility of exposure to disease, toxics or harmful irritants. Safety glasses should be required in the vicinity of machinery, conveyors, shipping operations and other locations where glass may be broken or where there is any possible hazard of flying glass fragments.

When there is occasional glass breakage, the safe way to collect the glass is with pieces of cardboard, heavy paper, or dustpan and brush. Never with bare hands. Smaller particles should be picked up with several thicknesses of wet paper towels then discarded. Cloth napkins, cloth towels, sponges or ordinary mops should not be used for clean up because they can harbor tiny glass particles. For broken glass containers with liquids, an ordinary long-range rubber squeegee or broom used with a dustpan provides the safest removal. Until the glass breakage can be cleaned up, a warning sign should be posted in the area to alert others of the danger.

A package containing broken glass should not be placed inside a waste basket or garbage can where it might injure others. Broken and discarded glassware should always be separated from other waste to prevent serious injury, especially if it is contaminated with hazardous material. It should be placed alongside the waste can and clearly marked.

Where glass particles may be flushed down drains, solid interceptors should be installed to collect the particles. The interceptors should be cleaned by wet vacuuming prior to starting any work on the lines.

