

- ❖ Fire Prevention
  - ✓ Adequate means of escape
  - ✓ Adequate fire extinguishers and alarms
  - ✓ Installing sprinkler systems
  - ✓ Training in fire procedures
  - ✓ Designated emergency assembly points
- ❖ Noise control
  - ✓ Enclose noisy machines
  - ✓ Regular maintenance of machines
  - ✓ Provision of hearing protectors
- ❖ Proper guarding of machines to prevent cuts, lacerations and crush injuries e.g. needle-guard to prevent access of the finger to the area of risk
- ❖ Careful maintenance of the earthing arrangement of electrical tools.
- ❖ Adequate rest breaks
- ❖ Provision of adequate and appropriate safety signs e.g. NO SMOKING
- ❖ Job enrichment e.g. rotation of workers

- ❖ Provision of appropriate personal protective equipment e.g. steel gloves for cutters
- ❖ Provision of first aid facility and trained first aiders
- ❖ Good housekeeping
- ❖ Adequate washing and sanitary facilities
- ❖ Adequate and sanitary workers accommodation



**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

## *WORKING IN THE GARMENT INDUSTRY*



*FACTS ON THE HEALTH  
AND SAFETY RISKS*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- ❖ The industry covers the production of all types of garments
- ❖ Textiles can be made from natural, artificial or synthetic fibers

## 2. HEALTH AND SAFETY HAZARDS

### ❖ Physical Hazards

- Noise exposures—from various noisy machines e.g. embroidery

### ❖ Chemical Hazards

- Formaldehyde in resin treated fabric can cause respiratory and eye irritation, skin rashes, intestinal troubles and kidney disorders
- Detergents used in laundry can lead to skin irritation, dermatitis etc
- Toxic solvents (e.g. in binding seams, trichloroethylene for stain removal) can cause neurological and skin disorders

### ❖ Ergonomic hazards

- Risks of musculoskeletal problems (e.g. poor workstation design and tools, overbending) or injuries (e.g. back pain due to improper lifting of heavy cloth bundles)
- Posture defects, cramps, varicose veins and callosities

### ❖ Psychosocial Hazards

- Stress and fatigue due to paced work

### ❖ Safety Hazards

- Fire hazard
  - Accumulated flammable materials e.g. foam resins for lining and padding, and fine particulate coir
- Cuts and lacerations
  - From hand held saw, scissors, cutting knives or from sewing needles
- Garment presses poses risk of crushing and burning
- Electrical shocks e.g. from inadequate insulation of portable electrical power tools

## 3. OTHER HEALTH RISKS

- ❖ Warm and humid environment due to working conditions and overcrowding can cause unduly high incidence of infectious disease and general ill health
- ❖ Eyestrain, throat irritation due to dust inhalation in handling cloth

## 4. PREVENTION AND CONTROL

### ❖ General environmental conditions:

- ✓ Ample air space and good ventilation
- ✓ Comfortable temperature
- ✓ Adequate illumination

### ❖ Ergonomics

- ✓ Ergonomically designed machines
- ✓ Well designed seats—to ensure normal posture and reduce fatigue
- ✓ Adjustable seats and backs
- ✓ Proper manual handling/correct lifting techniques