General Information links for Schools Officers

Schools Officers, and all other Operations Officers, perform a wide range of duties that require a knowledge and understanding of health and safety practices.

Applying the principals of health and safety in your daily work routines helps to prevent or minimise injuries and illness in your workplace. The Department of Education, Training and Employment’s (DETE) policies and procedures (http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx) register provides guidance on departmental expectations, roles and responsibilities with regard to health and safety in the workplace. The Creating Healthier Workplaces website also contains useful resources to assist you to undertake your role safely (http://education.qld.gov.au/health/safety/index.html).

Operations Officers make a significant contribution to the maintenance of school facilities. A key resource that operational officers will find very useful in the first instance is this “Green Folder”. The link http://education.qld.gov.au/health/safety/managing/schools-officers.html should be accessed regularly, and at least annually, to access current information provided by DETE to support the operational role. You can also access health and safety fact sheets, safety alerts and checklists from the Creating Healthier Workplaces website http://education.qld.gov.au/health/safety/resources.html:


The following link provides access to general information that will be helpful to School’s Officers: https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Facilities/Forschools/SchoolMaintenance/Pages/default.aspx

Confined spaces

Entering confined spaces (e.g. drains, rainwater tanks, lift wells, pontoons, silos) for maintenance, cleaning or inspection purposes requires specific knowledge and skills to complete tasks safely. Work permits are required to conduct activities in confined spaces and there are stringent legislative requirements that apply. As such, no school personnel should undertake confined spaces work. Further information is available at: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/confined-spaces-cop-2011.pdf.

Community use of school facilities

This link accesses information that may be helpful to assist Officers should your school hire school/campus facilities to community groups or organisations. https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Facilities/Forschools/Pages/Communityuse.aspx. Good practice would include a risk assessment that minimised the health and safety issues surrounding the activity to the lowest practicable level.

Design requirements for Education Queensland school facilities


Emergency management and response

Effective planning and management of emergencies helps reduce potential loss of life and property damage. The Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 requires that a (comprehensive) emergency plan is in place at the workplace. This plan must include specific emergency information and must be current. This regulation also requires regular testing of and training in the emergency procedures.

It is vital that Schools Officers are aware of/participate in the effective planning and management of emergencies that allow teaching and learning to be maintained or resumed as soon as possible after an incident. Strategies to increase the level of disaster preparedness can be found at: https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Facilities/Forms/Documents/Forms/Emergency_Management_and_Response.aspx
Fire Safety

The *Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990* and the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* detail the main legislative fire safety provisions in Queensland. DETE sites are required to comply with the legal requirements of these and other related statutes. The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) have the power to undertake audits at commercial sites (including DETE facilities) to measure compliance with all fire legislation. As Schools Officers often act as a liaison and information source for fire safety, access to this information is important: [https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Facilities/Forschools/Pages/FireSafety.aspx](https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Facilities/Forschools/Pages/FireSafety.aspx)

Invasive ants and facilities

*Fire ants* are a direct safety issue for schools. Fire ants are mainly found in SE Qld but have been found elsewhere in Queensland. If you find fire ants at your school the Principal should be notified and then arrangements should be made for Biosecurity Queensland (part of DPI) to treat the infestation. Under Queensland legislation, fire ants are a notifiable pest and suspected sightings must be reported to Biosecurity Queensland.

*Electric ants* have been found in the Cairns area. It is important that Schools Officers in the Restricted Area be aware of the obligations regarding the movement of high risk materials.

The *yellow crazy ant* is a class 1 declared species in Queensland. Schools are required by law to keep their land free of this pest.

Further information about these pests can be found on the [Department of Primary Industries website](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/industry/agriculture/index.htm) including maps with declared restricted areas.

Rural Safety information

Many DETE workplaces are located outside of metropolitan areas and therefore have different working environments to smaller, inner-city campuses. The following link accesses information about general rural responsibilities and agricultural hazards: [http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/industry/agriculture/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/industry/agriculture/index.htm)

School maintenance information


School security

The School Security Handbook is a complete guide for security matters including key management, alarm system maintenance, access control, lighting and strategies for the protection of equipment. The [School Security Handbook](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/industry/agriculture/index.htm) is available for download as either one whole document or in separate parts.

Solar Energy

Swimming pools

School Swimming Pools - Operation and Management identifies responsibilities and strategies regarding the maintenance and operation of state school swimming and hydrotherapy pools to support a safe and healthy pool environment and optimal service delivery.


Water management and conservation


Water Tanks


Other Useful Contacts

- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland Infoline: 1300 369 915
- Electrical Safety Queensland Infoline: 1300 650 662
- Queensland Health Infoline: 13 43 25 84 (13 Health) - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Poisons Information 131126

Other Useful Websites

- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland - The statutory body that enforces and provides advice on Queensland workplace health and safety legislation.
- Qld Health Fact Sheets - The Health Information Directory provides access to online health and well-being information. The fact sheets and other resources on this site are constantly expanded and regularly reviewed.
- DETE Library Services Databases - Web-based access to selected Australian and International databases and full-text information services. Resources include Australian Standards, journal articles, reports, statistical surveys, and research findings.
- Schools Officers Resources – A link to the DETE OnePORTAL website for human resources, industrial awards and professional development information for Schools Officers

Should you require further information regarding health and safety in your role, you should speak to your Principal or workplace health and safety committee/officer in the first instance. DETE also has Regional Health and Safety Consultants who will provide health and safety advice to your schools. Current contact details can be found at http://education.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/hscontacts.html.