Painter Fact Sheets



WHAT DOES A PAINTER DO?

A painter applies paint and other decorative finishes to interior and exterior surfaces of buildings and other structures.

Some of the main duties of a painter are to:

- Prepare surfaces to be painted (includes scraping, removal of wallpaper, etc.).
- Determine what materials will be needed.
- Use, clean, and maintain various equipment.
- Supervise apprentices or other workers.
- Provide estimates and invoices for clients.

What are some health and safety issues for painters?

Painters can work at a variety of workplaces, construction sites, homes, etc. and face a constantly changing set of hazards. The hazards include:

- Working at heights.
- Ladders, platforms and scaffolds.
- Working in confined spaces.
- Risk of eye injury.
- Slips, trips and falls.
- Risk of injury from falling objects.
- Exposure to moulds, fungi and bacteria.
- Exposure to bird and rodent droppings.
- Exposure to paint products, solvents, lead and other toxic substances.
- Proximity to flammable or combustible materials.
- Working in awkward positions, or performing repetitive physical tasks.
- Standing for long periods of time.
- Lifting heavy or awkward objects.
- Exposure to heat and ultraviolet radiation.
- Noise.
- Stress.
- Electrical hazards from working close to live electrical power lines or equipment.
- Shift work or extended work days.
- Working alone.

What are some preventive measures for painters?

- Check safety data sheet (SDS) of the paint or coating product for the selection and use of appropriate personal protective equipment and safe use of the product.
- Evaluate the work area for existing and potential hazards. Know the control measures of the identified hazards and associated risks.
- Learn the correct procedures for working at heights.
- Select the correct ladder for the job. Use extended handle paintbrush whenever possible, and eliminate the use of ladders.
- Avoid awkward body positions and take breaks when needed.
- Learn safe lifting techniques.
- Know how to prevent injury from electrical hazards. Maintain safe distances from energized electrical equipment or utility lines.
- Keep tools and equipment, and their safety features, in good working order.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment and footwear.
- Keep work areas clear of clutter and equipment.
- Learn safety procedures for working in confined spaces.
- Maintain good ventilation during painting.
- Know how to prevent exposure to bird and rodent droppings.

What are some good general safe work practices?

- Practice safety procedures for:
    - Working at heights
    - Working with asbestos contained products
    - Using ladders
    - Lifting
    - Repetitive physical tasks
    - Selection, use, maintenance and storage of personal protective equipment
    - Confined space entry
- Follow company safety rules.
- Learn about chemical hazards, WHMIS and SDSs.
- Know how to report a hazard
- Follow good housekeeping procedures.
- Select less harmful substances or products where possible.

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