

5 Essential Tips For Businesses To Avoid Costly Accidents

20 Mar 2025

Ensuring workplace safety is important for businesses in Singapore, not only to protect employees but also to prevent financial setbacks resulting from accidents. Despite maintaining a record-low workplace fatality rate of 1.0 per 100,000 workers in the first half of 20241, there remains a pressing need for vigilance and proactive measures. Here are five essential tips to help businesses avoid costly accidents.

1. Foster a safety-first culture

Cultivating a workplace environment that prioritises safety encourages employees to adhere to protocols and report potential hazards. Regular training sessions, clear communication channels, and leadership commitment are vital components of this culture. When employees feel responsible for their safety and that of their colleagues, the likelihood of accidents diminishes significantly.

2. Comply with the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Act

Singapore's WSH Act mandates that employers ensure the safety and health of their workers. Compliance involves conducting risk assessments, implementing safety measures, and providing necessary training. Non-compliance can lead to severe penalties, including fines and legal action2. Staying updated with the latest regulations and ensuring adherence is crucial for accident prevention.

3. Invest in regular equipment maintenance

Faulty equipment is a common cause of workplace accidents. Regular maintenance checks and prompt repairs can prevent malfunctions that lead to injuries. Implementing a scheduled maintenance program ensures that all machinery and tools are in optimal working condition, thereby reducing the risk of accidents.

4. Provide comprehensive training programmes

Employees should be well-trained to perform their tasks safely. Comprehensive training programs, including onboarding sessions for new hires and refresher courses for existing staff, equip employees with the knowledge to handle equipment properly and respond to emergencies. Tailoring training to specific job roles ensures relevance and effectiveness.

5. Secure appropriate insurance coverage

While preventive measures are essential, accidents can still occur. Securing appropriate insurance coverage, such as public liability insurance, can mitigate financial losses. In Singapore, businesses can consider options like China Taiping's public liability insurance, which protects against legal liabilities arising from business operations.

When is public liability insurance required?

Public liability insurance is essential for businesses that interact with the public, customers, or third-party vendors. It is particularly important for industries where accidents could lead to claims of injury or property damage. Businesses that operate in high-traffic areas, host public events, or provide on-site services should consider public liability insurance as a necessity.

While it is not legally mandatory in Singapore for all businesses, it is highly recommended. Some industries, such as construction and event management, may require public liability insurance as part of their licensing or contractual obligations.

What are the benefits of public liability insurance?

Public liability insurance offers several key benefits for businesses. It provides financial protection by covering legal costs and compensation in the event of third-party injury or property damage. This helps ensure business continuity, preventing financial disruptions caused by unexpected claims. Additionally, having public liability insurance enhances the credibility and trust of a business, as it demonstrates responsibility and preparedness. In some cases, it may also be a requirement for regulatory compliance, with certain industries or business contracts making public liability coverage a prerequisite.

What are some of the industries where public liability insurance is commonly required?

- Construction: Protects against injury claims from site visitors or damage to neighbouring properties. Retail & hospitality: Covers incidents like slips and falls in restaurants, hotels, and shopping malls.
- Event management: Protects against liability arising from accidents during public or corporate events.
- Manufacturing & warehousing: Shields against claims from clients or suppliers visiting the premises.
- Professional services: Includes legal coverage for businesses like cleaning services, repair work, or consultants visiting client offices.

How much public liability coverage is required?

The coverage amount depends on the nature and risk level of the business. Policies typically range from S\$500,000 to S\$10 million or more, depending on the potential exposure to third-party claims. Businesses should assess their risk profile, customer interactions, and regulatory requirements to determine the appropriate coverage.

For example, if a customer accidentally trips over a piece of equipment left unattended by your employee and sustains an injury, they may seek legal compensation. Such unexpected "accident" costs can be detrimental to your business. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure your business is covered with public liability insurance.

By selecting a suitable public liability insurance plan, businesses in Singapore can ensure comprehensive financial protection tailored to their specific operational needs. This approach embodies the principle of small business, big protection – providing peace of mind regardless of your company's size.

Conclusion

Proactive safety measures and adequate insurance coverage are indispensable for businesses aiming to protect their workforce and financial health. By adhering to these essential tips, companies can create a safer work environment and avoid the repercussions of workplace accidents.

For more information on public liability insurance in Singapore, consider exploring China Taiping's offerings to find a plan that suits your business needs.

References

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