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HOUSEKEEPING STANDARDS
LINT MANAGEMENT

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

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INTRODUCTION

This good practice guidance identifies the unique risks associated with lint levels in laundries and suggests appropriate safeguards to protect against them. The equipment/areas which generate the main levels of lint are:

1. Sorting areas.
2. Continuous tunnel washer – hoppers - bag drop area
3. Tumble driers (manual or automatic)
4. Garment tunnel finishers
5. Ironer lines

Lint will be generated within the normal processing activities in a laundry environment due to the agitation and movement of cotton-based linen stock.

Lint accumulations can cause an explosion due to the potentially large surface area and the large volume of oxygen that is in and around the lint.

It is good practice to keep lint accumulations to an absolute minimum at all times within the laundry environment.

Note – it is pertinent to consider dust accumulations the same as lint accumulations and the relevant details of this best practice should be equally applied to the management and control of dust accumulations.

KEY CONTROLS

The key controls are as follows:

1. The internal roof structure/area of the factory should be subject to a high-level cleaning programme on a regular interval, preventing any accumulations. As a good practice, the high-level cleaning should employ a suction vacuum process instead of a “blowing down” process.

2. All lint-generating equipment should be subject to a comprehensive cleaning programme to eliminate any lint accumulations. This cleaning programme will include all areas around and inside the equipment.

   Note – Cleaning activity inside the equipment needs to be controlled through a safe system of work which includes a “lock off” process for the power source.
3. Any lint collection devices (i.e. lint screens) fitted to equipment should be fully operational at all times with the lint removed on a frequent basis during each shift.
4. Any lint collection devices (i.e. lint screens) should be subject to a regular inspection and maintenance process to prevent any breach of the lint screen ‘mesh’. If a breach has occurred, it will mean that lint will be inside the internal areas of the equipment.
5. If a large-scale lint collection system is used (i.e. collecting lint from an automated tumble drier line or atmospheric), an appropriate anti-static process should be operational (i.e. earthing).
6. Any lint accumulations should be removed from all external ducting outlet areas with the aid of an appropriate cleaning programme. All ductwork systems should be appropriately designed to allow routine inspections and cleaning.

   Note – This activity is likely to involve roof work or working at height which would require appropriate safe system of work and/or permit of work by competent individual/s.
7. Lint screens should be vacuumed and not dry brushed or blown down with air lines. This is to prevent further airborne dust.

Questions or comments to:

Shyju Skariah
Director Programmes and Projects
E: **shyju.skariah@tsa-uk.org**

Textile Services Association
Venture House, 2 Arlington Square
Downshire Way, Bracknell
RG12 1WA

E: **tsa@tsa-uk.org**
T: **020 3151 5600**

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