

Safety Bulletin 01-08: 20 Feb 2008

Pressure Vessels & Autoclaves

(1) Introduction

The University of Melbourne owns and controls over 150 autoclaves across a number of Faculties and Departments. Autoclaves contain at least one pressure vessel. Some of these pressure vessels are classified as high risk plant under the *OHS Regulations 2007* (Vic). During 2005 and 2006, WorkSafe Victoria undertook a project to review the University's management of high risk plant, in particular pressure vessels contained within autoclaves. WorkSafe has indicated that it will revisit the University's management of autoclaves during 2008.



(2) Key Regulatory Requirements

Pressure vessels are classified (by AS 4343) according to maximum volume, operating pressure, type of fluid/gas and type of door closure. The regulatory requirements for each pressure vessel are dependant on the hazard level classification.

Hazard Level	Regulatory Requirement
A, B, C & D	The pressure vessel design must be notified to WorkSafe in Victoria or another state
A, B & C	The pressure vessel must also be registered with WorkSafe Victoria.
All	All plant, including autoclaves, must have current plant hazard identification and risk assessments.
All	All plant, including autoclaves, must have records of inspection, maintenance and repair.
All	All plant, including autoclaves, must have records of operator training in the safe use of the plant.

(3) Information and Support

Scheduled Internal Inspections	In 2005, the EHS Unit developed a database of registered pressure vessels owned or controlled by Faculties, Schools and Departments. This database is used to coordinate scheduled internal inspections by a consultant, for all registered pressure vessels that appear in the database. This inspection service is provided at cost to the Faculty or Department.
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Page 1 of 2

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**Contract for Scheduled and Preventative Maintenance**

During 2007, the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences established a contract for autoclave scheduled and preventative maintenance. This contract establishes competitive fixed prices for scheduled maintenance in conformance with AS 3873: Pressure Equipment – Operation and Maintenance. Other Faculties, Schools and Departments are invited to participate in this contract established by MDHS. Scheduled service prices are dependant on the hazard level of the autoclave, and Departments are invoiced separately. Details of the servicing schedule are available from http://www.pb.unimelb.edu.au/ehs/workplace_ehs/pressuremanagement.php3

Pressure Vessel Plant Risk Assessment Worksheet

A dedicated Pressure Vessel Plant Risk Assessment Worksheet and a list of common hazards associated with autoclaves is available from the EHS Unit website at http://www.pb.unimelb.edu.au/ehs/workplace_ehs/pressuremanagement.php3

(4) Actions Required

For each item of plant, containing one or more pressure vessels, the following actions are required:

Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment	Ensure hazard identification and risk assessment has been completed and documented in accordance with the <i>OHS Regulations 2007</i> – the template provided on the EHS Unit website should be used to ensure the requirements of the <i>OHS Regulations</i> are complied with. A copy of the hazard identification and risk assessment should be kept with the item of plant.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training	Ensure all staff and/or students using and operating plant, including autoclaves, have received training in its safe operation. A record of training must be made and should be kept with the item of plant.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Design Notification	Ensure that each pressure vessel with a hazard level of A-D has been design notified to WorkSafe – confirmation is usually verified by documentation or certification stamps on the body of the pressure vessel. If this information has been provided to the EHS Unit, then it is also recorded in the pressure vessel database.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current Registration	Ensure that each pressure vessel with a hazard level of A-C has current registration with WorkSafe Victoria. Registration can only be confirmed by a current certificate of registration. The registration certificate should be kept with the pressure vessel.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintenance	Ensure that autoclaves and other plant containing pressure vessels are maintained in accordance with relevant standards, including AS 3873. Records of all scheduled maintenance and repair must be retained. These should be kept with the item of plant.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusion in the Pressure Vessel Database	Ensure that information about each pressure vessel owned or controlled by a Faculty, School or Department has been provided to the EHS Unit for recording in the pressure vessel database. Inclusion in the pressure vessel database enables central monitoring of inspections, design notification and currency of registration.	<input type="checkbox"/>