



How to Manage Warehouse Safety

Over the years warehouses have gone from being a mere container of materials into a production department in its own right at the center of the increasingly complex management of business activities. When planning a new warehouse or reorganizing existing ones, it's crucial that the safety aspects are considered, since this aspect also lets companies offer their customers greater product quality assurance.

The factors for safety in logistics range from the implementation and observation of fire-fighting laws to the creation of warehousing structures, such as shelving, guarantee safety during use or the use of standard-compliant equipment that facilitate the employee's job provided strict rules are followed.

These rules must be applied throughout the company: from goods taken to storage to shipping. Access routes, exits and emergency exits need to be taken into account, creating a system of safety that involves not just the equipment used, but also the system that certifies the workplaces and the level of service provided by staff.

The Design Stage

In order to avoid conflicts and discrepancies between company needs and those of the safety system, a detailed

study is needed when planning the warehouse or logistics centers. Identify requirements and find the best solution that anticipates and satisfies the need to rationalize the warehouse, while ensuring that all safety requirements are fully met. Remember that incompatible substances need to be kept far apart. People should be able to reach the fire exits as quickly as possible, and fire-fighting equipment should be easily and quickly available. These fundamental concepts are the base of a truly effective safety program in the workplace.

Fire-fighting systems can be either passive or active. Passive systems are those that prevent the development and spread of a fire, while active systems help to slow down or extinguish a fire. The company owner is expected to be totally committed to ensuring that such a system is effective. In fact, he or she is the person ultimately responsible for the introduction and implementation of company safety systems. Under Italian law (legislative decree n° 626/94), for example, "prevention service managers" need to be nominated and trained. These should, of course, be members of company staff, since they have the best inside knowledge of the workplace. The electrical systems and fire prevention system must be constantly checked, the emergency exits must be kept free of obstacles and a safety register (a statutory requirement) must be kept where details of all controls and action taken must be noted.

Shelving

Shelving is an important feature of a warehouse when it comes to safety. A specific quality and safety mark exists for this. The use of shelving can lead to specific risks linked to the storage of goods and the use of vehicles and other means