

Code of Practice 3: Saunas and steam rooms

Purpose

The purpose of this code of practice (COP) is to support the policy decisions and conditions of licence adopted by the council in respect of special treatments establishments. This particular code of practice is concerned with sauna and steam room facilities.

Scope

This COP details specific requirements for sauna and steam room treatments in addition to those laid down in the regulations prescribing standard conditions applicable to all special treatment licensed premises.

Definitions

Sauna

Saunas consist of an insulated enclosure made of wood, together with heat generating equipment usually in the form of a heat-generating stove. Benches are provided within the sauna enclosure. Saunas provide a dry heat and the temperature may range from 85 Celsius to 100 Celsius for up to a ten minute treatment.

Steam room/bath

These consist of an enclosure made of an impervious material and steam generating equipment. They are designed to operate at temperatures of up to 50 Celsius regulated by a thermostat with relative humidity of 80 to 100 percent. They produce a wet humid heat and are intended for indoor use. Usually lasting up to 12 minutes.

Cleaning

This is a physical process which removes soil eg dust, dirt and organic matter, along with a large proportion of germs. Cleaning with hot water and detergent breaks up grease and dirt on floors and surfaces. Cleaning is also essential prior to disinfection and sterilisation of instruments and equipment.

Disinfectant

For the purposes of cleaning, a high level disinfectant relates to disinfectants capable of reducing the number of viable bacteria and blood borne viruses including Hepatitis B and C and HIV but may not necessarily inactivate some viruses and bacterial spores. Where the disinfectant requires dilution this must be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using clean potable water. Once diluted the disinfectant must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Qualifications and training

From January 2005 one person on reception at any one time must have one of the following:

- sports management sauna/steam room training
- ITEC level 3 diploma in spa treatments (must have completed a level 3 diploma in holistic massage or diploma in body treatments first)
- specific manufacturer training for the facility offered in your premises

Staff should be trained and competent to carry out all duties and responsibilities in an



approved manner. Holders of qualifications or training not listed above must be able to demonstrate during interview a sound knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of responsible management of such facilities this will include:

- health and safety risks
- infection control
- client consultation and contra-indications
- emergency action plan

Further training may be required if these criteria cannot be met.

Health and safety procedures

The floor of the equipment should be impervious, laid to fall to promote drainage and easily cleaned. It should also be constructed of a non-slip material.

Sauna

A thermometer gauge must be present and located on the inside of the unit.

Steam room

- The operator must be aware of the temperature the unit is operating at. Ideally there should be a thermometer located inside the unit. If this is not fitted the temperature inside the unit must be checked regularly and in accordance with usage and a log maintained of the temperature.
- Temperature control must remain under the control of the licence holder.
- Sauna/steam room doors must have a glazed panel to allow safe access and egress by clients and supervising staff.
- The door must have an internal handle to allow the client to exit the room when required.
- There must be a non-verbal alarm system linked to a manned reception area for summoning help when users are left unattended. The alarm should continue to sound until it is manually switched to the 'off' position in order to silence it. The user must be made aware of the alert mechanism and how to use it.
- The licensee shall have a written policy detailing the action to be taken in the event

of the alert mechanism being used. This shall be communicated to all relevant personnel.

- All equipment shall be of sound mechanical construction.
- The electrical safety, including the adequate earthing and insulation of all equipment, should be examined periodically by a qualified engineer who should report in writing the result of his inspection. Equipment must be regularly serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and a record of such services and copies of the electrical engineers report must be kept on the premises for inspection if required in accordance with the latest IEE (Institute of Electrical Engineers) requirements.
- A clock or timer must be visible in order to monitor time elapsed in the sauna/steam room.
- A notice providing accurate information on the safe use of the sauna/steam room must be clearly displayed near each unit.
- Clients should be advised to sit on a towel in the sauna/steam room to reduce the risk of infection and burning.
- The licensee shall provide a procedure whereby all saunas/steam rooms are checked on a half hourly basis for cleanliness and for state of health of the user eg signs of fainting.
- A cool shower/plunge pool should be provided. Where a plunge pool is provided adequate arrangements must be made for the water to be circulated, filtered and disinfected.
- A rest area for users should be provided, users should be advised to rest for half an hour after treatment.
- The sauna/steam room shall have adequate lighting such that any users can see the exit door and any signs/instructions clearly.

Health and safety specific to saunas

- Only coals recommended for use by the manufacturer should be used and they should be replaced at regular intervals depending on usage.

- The coals/heater unit within the sauna must be fenced to protect from burning.
- This should surround the unit extending 150mm above the coals.
- The temperature must be between 80 Celsius and 100 Celsius for a sauna.
- Clients must wear appropriate bathing costumes to reduce the risk of infection and burning.
- Towels should be provided to sit on in the sauna as a hygiene measure.
- Health and safety specific to steam rooms.
- The temperature must not exceed 50 Celsius for a steam room.

Client consultation procedures

All clients must complete a medical questionnaire before their first use of the sauna/steam room to ascertain any contra-indications these should include:

- pregnancy
- diabetes
- seizures eg epilepsy
- suffering from heart disease, circulatory problems, high or low blood pressure
- suffering from infectious skin disease, sores and wounds
- suffering an illness causing an inability to perspire
- are taking antihistamines, anticoagulants, vasoconstrictors, vasodilators, stimulants, hypnotic or tranquilliser or any other medication which makes the potential user unsure as to the advisability of using the sauna/steam room
- have consumed a heavy a meal within one and half hours
- suffer from migraine attacks
- suffer from any condition whatsoever that makes the user unsure as to the advisability of using sauna/steam room

Clients that indicate they suffer from one of the above should be referred to their GP for advice on their suitability to use the facilities.

Control of infection

The surface of the sauna/steam room must be cleaned and disinfected each day in accordance with manufacturer's instructions

and with cleaning materials specified by the manufacturer.

Record keeping

A risk assessment must be carried out for this activity to include slipping, tripping, falling, risk of burning, the risk to individuals with pre-existing medical conditions and pregnant women and any other hazards associated with the facilities. The risk assessment must be available for inspecting officers at the time of the inspection.

Consultation records must be held on the premises and be available for inspection by an authorised officer.

Review

This code of practice will be reviewed regularly and updated in light of current industry guidance and legal opinion. Any changes will be notified to licensees and will be attached as conditions to your licence with effect from then date of the next renewal of your licence.

Up to date copies are available by phoning our office on 01895 250191.

Further information

Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (IRSM)

Sir John Beckwith Centre for Sport,
Loughborough University,
Loughborough,
Leics LE11 3TU

☎ 01509 226474

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

'Body Art, Cosmetic Therapies and other Special Treatments'

☎ 020 7928 6006

@ shop@cieh.net

The following Hillingdon Council Guidance Notes should be consulted in conjunction with this code of practice:

- Decontamination