

Unfortunately, “thy shall not steal” commandment is not inbuilt in all of us and even with workplace policies on theft and video surveillance workplace theft still occurs. It can range from stationary supplies to toilet paper and often the first aid kits. Currently the NSW OHS Regulations states that employers are to provide first aid facilities and if the site has more than 25 employees that a trained First Aider is required onsite. Therefore, no matter what your business or industry is you are required to provide a first aid kit or kits at the workplace. What type of first aid kit required is determined by the size of your organisation and the type of work being undertaken. By the time you realise you are having theft from your kits you would have already gone through the process of assessing what type of first aid kits you need, where it should be located and how many you require. NSW WorkCover, First Aid in the Workplace Guide, states that, “Kits must be available and accessible during working hours, however we do need to establish measures to ensure kits are not misused or subject to pilfering. Additionally, it is an offence under Section 21 of the OHS Act to abuse first aid facilities.” Therefore, we shouldn’t be locking our kits up during working hours. However, we can put in place strategies that will deter people from opening them unless it’s necessary which will then in theory reduce the theft. Below are some ideas that may help reduce the theft from your workplace first aid kits:

1. As part of your employee induction process include your first aid policy and explain to the employees that it is important that we report any use of the kits to ensure we can determine the course of the injury and reduce it from happening again.
2. Additionally, advise employees that it is an offence under Section 21 of the OHS Act to abuse first aid facilities and this includes stealing from them.
3. Investigate if you are really having a theft issue, or are people getting hurt, using the contents of the first aid kit and just not reporting it?
4. Think about the location of your first aid kit. Is it in an obvious spot where if someone was to steal from it others would see, or is it tucked away in the back of the kitchen where temptation is lurking?
5. Who is refilling your first aid kit and how?
6. Tamper tags such as seal ties seen on fire extinguishers are a good idea, as they can be installed and broken easily with our hands to gain access into the first aid kit. Additionally, you can then easily identify if the kit has been accessed.
7. Promote via newsletters and staff memos that theft is occurring in the workplace and that you will be taking a closer look and monitoring the usage of first aid kits because of it. Often this is enough to curb the theft for a while, however in the long term it may creep back.
8. If you have CCTV or video surveillance on site consider pointing them towards the first aid kits.
9. Start internally charging out the cost of the first aid equipment to the department’s budget of where the kit is located. As this will demonstrate that you are watching the cost, and that will often then drive the department manager to keep a closer eye on the first aid kit and its usage.

I hope this has given you some ideas to think about. If any readers have any further ideas on how they have managed to minimise the theft from their first aid kits please contact us at info@dowellsolutions.com.au or www.dowellsolutions.com.au We would love to hear from you.

Contacts

Kylie Dowell
0408471570
[mailto: info@dowellsolutions.com.au](mailto:info@dowellsolutions.com.au)