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WORKED EXAMPLE: RISK ASSESSMENT AND METHOD STATEMENT

Cleaning the outside of a two-storey office with a water-fed pole

Hollins & Reed Window Cleaning Ltd · 18 and 19 November 2026 · In charge: Dan Hollins

Worked example. Change it to fit your job before you use it.

Job details

Company	Hollins & Reed Window Cleaning Ltd
Site and work area	Alder House, 3 Bridgefield Way, Stockport
Planned dates	18 and 19 November 2026
Customer	Thornley Vale Estates Ltd
In charge on site	Dan Hollins
Team	Two people, both trained in water-fed pole work: Dan Hollins leads; Priya Shah works with him and they swap between the pole and the cones. They stay on the same side of the building, in sight of each other. New starters do not join this job until they are practised on a short pole.
Work	Cleaning the outside of a two-storey office with a water-fed pole
Prepared by	Dan Hollins
Signature	
Date	

Work and boundaries

Clean the outside glass from the ground. Areas: Front and entrance elevation, with the walkway and first parking bays; Side and rear elevations, with the parking bays below them

Working arrangement

- Access: the floor or ground.
- Other people will be using the area.
- The offices stay open. Why from the ground: every window can be seen from the car park and the top of the first-floor glass is about 6.5 m up, so a 7.5 m pole does the whole job and nobody needs a ladder, a cradle or a lift. The coned area is about 7.5 m wide, and the building sits behind its own car park, so it never reaches the public footway. The entrance side is done from 07:00 to

08:30, before staff arrive, and the building manager keeps the parking bays under each side empty on its day. The hose runs from the van, parked inside the cones, and never crosses the car park aisle. The only overhead line is the low-voltage line along the rear boundary, about 15 m from the rear wall. Cold mornings mean waterproofs and gloves, and a break in the van between sides.

Emergency arrangements

Anyone hurt, including a slip on the paving or a struck visitor: Priya Shah rings 999, or Dan Hollins if Priya is the one hurt, and sends for the office first aider, J. Patel, at reception. Our own first aid kit is in the van. Reception opens the car park barrier and meets the crew at the Bridgefield Way entrance, and the van moves if it blocks the way to the casualty. Before reception opens, the building manager's key holder does this, and our own first aid kit is the first aid. Fire: the building's alarm. Lower the pole, leave it inside the cones and go to the assembly point at the front corner of the car park, and report to the building manager.

Planned method

1. **Set up the work area**
   Confirm the work area and scope before starting. Keep other people outside the active work area. Keep entrances and escape routes clear.

2. **Keep people clear of the work**
   Agree how people get past or around the work while it is going on. Put barriers or signs where a route crosses the work. Do not leave open work unattended.

3. **Stay on the ground**
   Every window is cleaned with a water-fed pole from the ground. Nobody works from a ladder, a roof or a platform. Look at every window from the ground first. If you cannot see it clearly, leave it out and tell the client. Look for loose gutters, flashing and other parts a pole could knock down.

4. **Check the pole and the water system**
   Check the pole for worn, cracked, dented or bent sections, loose clamps, a loose brush head and worn butt rings. Check the filters are in date and the system has had its annual sterilisation. Check the tank is secured in the van and the full tank keeps the van within its payload.

5. **Keep the pole away from overhead lines**
   Every side of the building has been walked. No overhead line is within 10 m of where the pole goes up. Raise and lower the pole only at the places checked on the walk, and only with the brush against the building. Never lift the pole away from the building to rinse it, lower it or walk it to the next window.

6. **Check the weather before you start**
   Stop handling cleaning equipment and water-fed poles when the wind is strong enough to catch them. Stop for ice or any risk of lightning. Rain alone does not stop this job: no overhead line is within 10 m.

7 **Cone off the area around the pole**
Cone off an area as wide as the pole is high. Put warning signs out for wet ground and hoses, and wear hi-viz. Use bright hose, with a sign wherever it crosses a walkway.

8 **Clean with the lightest pole that reaches**
Use the shortest, lightest pole that reaches the top of the window. Purified water only, with no chemicals. Brush the glass and frame from the top down, then rinse. Work from the legs: a single step forward and back takes the effort off your arms. Swap sides, and share the pole across the team. Never leave a raised pole unattended, even for a moment. Wear safety boots: a pole can slip through your hands.

9 **Keep the wet paving safe**
Squeegee water off walkways and entrances as you go. In frost, grit the walkways and stop if the water freezes on the paving or in the hoses.

10 **Check the glass and ground before handing back**
Check the glass, seals, ground and equipment before leaving. Tell the client about damaged glass, leaks or residue before the area is reopened.

11 **Clear and hand back the area**
Remove tools, waste and unused materials. Check the area is clean and ready to use. Tell the customer or whoever runs the site when the work is complete.

Risk assessment

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Controls in place
People entering the work area or tripping over materials Step 1	Workers, occupants and visitors	Mark or barrier the active work area. Store tools and materials away from access routes.
People using the building or passing by walking into the work or over what it leaves Step 2	Occupants, visitors, members of the public and workers	Keep the barriers and signs up while the work is active. Give people a clear way round where their normal route is blocked.
Someone climbs to reach a window the pole cannot, and falls Step 3	Window cleaners	No ladder comes off the van for this job. A window the pole cannot reach is a different job with its own plan.
A failed pole falls on someone, or legionella grows in a neglected system and spreads in the spray Step 4	Window cleaners and people nearby	Take a defective pole off the job. Keep the system cool when it is not in regular use. In warm months, drain the tank and filters if it will stand idle for more than three days.

Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Controls in place
The pole touches an overhead line, or the current jumps to it, and electrocutes the person holding it Step 5	The person holding the pole	Treat the pole as able to carry current, whatever water is in it. Stop and tell the site contact if you find a line the walk missed.
Wind catches the cleaning equipment and water-fed poles and blows them onto people nearby Step 6	The team and people nearby	Check the forecast before you start and agree when the wind stops the work. Tie down or take in loose materials before you leave.
A falling pole strikes someone, or someone trips on a hose Step 7	People using the building, visitors and the public	Never run a hose across a road or vehicle route without barriers. Keep the coned area up until the pole is down.
Holding a pole up for long periods strains the back, neck and shoulders Step 8	Window cleaners	Take regular breaks, and do other tasks between runs of pole work. Stop if you cannot keep the pole under control in the wind. Stop and lower the pole if there is any risk of lightning.
Someone slips on wet or icy paving Step 9	People using the building, visitors and window cleaners	Keep the wet-floor signs out until the paving is clear. Watch your own footing while you look up at the pole.
Damage, wet ground or equipment is left where people can be exposed Step 10	Occupants, public and the client	Keep wet or closed areas protected until safe. Record defects and remove all tools, hoses and waste.
Debris, tools or unfinished work left in the area Step 11	Workers, occupants and visitors	Remove waste by the agreed route. Record and protect any unfinished work.