

ensuring safety during brewery tours

People love to see behind the scenes of their favourite craft breweries and brewers love showing off where they make their unique beers! However, it is easy for patrons to forget that breweries are industrial manufacturing facilities with a wide range of potential hazards.

The following best practices will help ensure the safety of all brewery visitors and tour participants.

THINK ABOUT POTENTIAL HAZARDS!

For example...

- » Slips, trips, falls and bumps
- » Powered industrial trucks (PITs), including forklifts
- » Noise
- » Proximity to chemicals and hot liquids



step 1

Eliminate as many potential hazards as you can!

- Avoid doing tours during production.
- Coordinate with production staff (brewers, cellar and packaging personnel, etc.) when planning tour dates and times and follow a standard, pre-approved route.
- Staff should keep the designated tour path clear of hazards like hoses, standing water, containers of chemicals and forklift traffic.

Pro tip: If packaging is happening during a tour, time it with the packaging team's lunch or dinner break.

- If tours happen by request, coordinate with production staff **before** bringing guests into the brewery. Tailor the tour route to avoid potential hazards.
- Tour participants can be a hazard! Don't overserve guests and exclude intoxicated or rowdy guests from the tour. If guests ignore verbal instructions, posted warning signs or physical barriers, ask them to leave the tour. Warn guests ahead of time that the brewery can be hot or cold, depending on the season. Physical and/or medical conditions of guests must be considered prior to tours, which may preclude certain guests from joining.

step 2

Engineer physical protection against remaining hazards.

- Ensure that OSHA-compliant machine guards and railings are in place, especially on structures built for tours, like viewing platforms.
- Set up physical barriers during tours to restrict access to production areas.
Pro tip: Be creative! Instead of orange cones or barricades, use items that complement the brewery's aesthetic, like barrels and rope or vintage movie theatre stanchions.
- Install bump-guarding on objects that guests could bump into or lean on.

step 3

Use written and verbal warnings to highlight remaining hazards.

- Put up "OFF LIMITS – HAZARDOUS AREA" signs during tours.
- Production staff should already have hot pipes, chemical containers, pinch points, etc. labelled according to OSHA standards, but make sure these warnings and labels are visible from the tour path, too.
- Verbally warn guests of potential hazards they will encounter and let them know that breaking any rules or instructions will result in being asked to leave.

step 4

Require appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

- Require guests to wear appropriate eye protection at all times.
- Hearing protection should be offered and should be required anywhere that it is required for staff.
- Require closed-toe shoes (no high heels, sandals, etc.) for all guests. Be mindful of wet, slippery areas where more protective footwear may be necessary.

keys to success

Having regularly scheduled tour days and times will make brewery tours less stressful for **everyone** in the brewery and easier for the public.

Keep tour sizes small! Small groups enable guides to keep their eye on everyone, ensuring guests don't touch anything they shouldn't or wander off.

Be flexible and alter your tour route based on production. The smaller your production area the more flexible you'll have to be. Create alternate routes to eliminate the stress of avoiding hazards on the fly.

Limit time spent in noisy and hot production areas. Tell your brewery's history before entering the brewery and take questions in the taproom or other area.

Be the boss! Don't be afraid to turn away guests that may be a liability during a tour. Accidents have major legal and financial implications for your brewery, which could be way worse publicity than one bad review from someone who didn't show up with proper footwear.

All breweries are unique - please reach out if you have questions!
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