

KEEP IT SAFE

BFFF QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

JULY 2009 EDITION

Welcome to the BFFF quarterly Health and Safety newsletter 'Keep it Safe'.

Many of you will have seen our health and safety column in 'The Bulletin'. The Bulletin will contain headline information on health and safety topics; 'Keep it Safe' will provide more comprehensive information relevant to our industry.

We do hope you find 'Keep It Safe' a valuable read. Please contact BFFF on 01400 283090 or email hazelcranidge@bff.co.uk if you would like to raise any health and safety issues or receive additional/back copies

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HSE CAMPAIGNS

During each HSE campaign, Inspectors visiting premises will focus on the key campaign areas and assess the standards, offer advice and enforce applicable legislation. It is also common during major campaigns that certain businesses will be targeted for inspection based on their activity i.e. if their work area is relevant to the current campaign.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

The HSE has launched a major new strategy, entitled "Be Part of the Solution", following consultations with safety representatives and stakeholder organisations. The new strategy is designed to reduce the number of workplace accidents while taking a common sense approach to ensuring that risk management is an enabler for business not a burden.

A key part of the strategy encompasses plans to make £1 million worth of HSE publications available to download and print for free, to help support small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in making informed decisions about health and safety.

The HSE says its latest research indicates that employers and workers alike both recognise overwhelmingly that providing a safe workplace makes sound commercial sense.

Similarly, nearly 90% of business leaders say that people are their organisation's most important asset. In addition to preventing accidents, 65% of employees say that good health and safety practices make them feel valued.

However, the HSE is concerned that the recession could make some workplaces more dangerous, as more than a quarter of business leaders say that that their organisation will face pressure to cut spending on health and safety.

The safety body believes the most effective way to improve health and safety practices is for senior management to show leadership on the issue. Therefore, as part of its new strategy, the HSE is calling on leaders to sign a pledge to "Be part of the solution" and improve health and safety standards.

The strategy was welcomed by Sir Steve Bullock, Chair of the Local Government Association human resources panel, who said, "Having a healthy and safe place to work is a fundamental right of every employee. But it is not a right that everyone enjoys. We must all work together to improve Britain's safety record."

The pledge and strategy itself can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/index.htm

ASBESTOS 'THE HIDDEN KILLER'

The single greatest cause of work-related deaths in the UK. Health and safety information on the dangers and management of asbestos in the workplace. Further information on:

www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/hiddenkiller/index

'SHATTERED LIVES'

Every month over a thousand people suffer serious injuries as a result of slips, trips or falls in the workplace. These shattering injuries can be avoided by sensible and proportionate management of the risks.

STEP elearning Tool - An easy way to learn about slips and trips and how to prevent www.hse.gov.uk/slips/step/index.htm

WAIT elearning Tool – Due summer 2009
Select the right access equipment if you need to work at height.
www.hse.gov.uk/falls/wait/index.htm

HSE FOCUS FOR THE FOOD MANUFACTURE INDUSTRY

The HSE have stated that their main enforcement focus for the food manufacture industry in 2009/2010 will be the management of health and safety and, in particular director/board level leadership and worker involvement.

Other topics that HSE inspectors are likely to examine are stated to be:

- Migrant Workers and other vulnerable workers - Good management practice and compliance with legal responsibilities;
- Risk Management - Competent management in terms of basic, sensible and proportionate health and safety also competency of any health and safety consultants contracted;
- Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) - Whether tasks causing high risk of manual handling injuries and consequent ill health have been addressed, including awareness of upper limb disorders (ULDs) and use of available tools for assessing repetitive injuries;
- Noise and Vibration - good practice in controlling noise and vibration, including health surveillance;
- Falls from Height - preventing falls from height by using appropriate equipment and safeguards;
- Dermatitis - prevention of control of dermatitis caused by contact with food products, cleaning agents etc by elimination of the risk where possible, skin checks, hand-care regime and correct glove selection and use;
- Machinery - e.g. compliance with Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations;
- Loading and Unloading of Vehicles - management of workplace transport around loading bays and MSD/back injury prevention;

- Slips and Trips - management of control measures to prevent injuries caused by slipping on food products, wet floors etc.
- Occupational Asthma - prevention of occupational asthma from flour and other dusts.

EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK 2008-09

The European Campaign for Safety and Health at Work for 2008-09 will focus on risk assessment. This two-year campaign is aimed at a wide range of stakeholders, including employers, workers and safety representatives, and is intended to promote the benefits of completing and implementing a risk assessment.

The campaign seeks to demystify the risk assessment process to show that risk assessment is not necessarily complicated, bureaucratic or a task only for experts.

The campaign also aims to raise awareness on this issue, provide information and practical advice, encourage activities that have a positive impact in the workplace, and identify and recognise good practice.

The focus of the second year of the campaign is promoting good practice in risk assessment. European week itself is from 19 - 25 October 2009.

The HSE website contains helpful information and material on risk assessment and European-wide initiatives:

www.hse.gov.uk/campaigns/euroweek

ASTHMA RISK TO BAKERS

Thousands of British bakers could be at risk of developing asthma unless they take sensible precautions, HSE has warned. They marked World Asthma Day by sending bakeries a pocket card with advice for workers.

An estimated 27,000 of the 100,000 works in the British baking industry regularly work with flour. Unless they are careful, they're at risk from shortness of breath, wheezing and painful coughing – just some of the symptoms that occupational asthma sufferers face daily.

Avoiding Asthma In Bakeries

Bakers are about 80 times more likely to develop occupational asthma than the average British worker, with around 100 new cases being diagnosed each year. Exposure to flour and bakery dust should be kept to a minimum and ensuring good housekeeping will help keep this in check.

Other key recommendations include:

- Handle flour and powdered products carefully. Dropping flour from a height or throwing with force will create dust clouds.
- Use sprinklers to spread dusting flour rather than hand throwing.
- Clean up spillages immediately. Do not use airlines or brushes to dry-sweep dust. Use high-efficiency industrial vacuum cleaners for general cleaning. Shovel up large amounts gently.
- Take care to avoid raising dust while loading ingredients into mixers.
- Start up mixers on slow speed until wet and dry ingredients are combined.

The HSE pocket card 'Bakers – time to clear the air! Flour dust can cause asthma' is available online via www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg429.pdf.

EFFECTIVE WAYS TO TACKLE WORKPLACE STRESS

The HSE website helps employees and employers discover effective, lasting answers to workplace stress – a problem that costs organisations with 500 employees circa 250 working days a year.

The tools and guides provided can help identify signs of stress, and help safeguard people's health. [Click here](#) for more details.

FUTURE EVENTS

Business advice open days are run during the year and cover all aspects of business including Health and Safety issues.

They aim to help businesses to meet and understand their legal responsibilities. Also to help businesses to enhance their operations through the use of new technology and better marketing techniques.

9th July 09 - Swansea

17 Sept 09 – Birmingham

For more details and online booking [click here](#)

'Keep it Safe' is now available to all BFFF members within the Health & Safety page of the 'Members Only' section of our website

www.bfff.co.uk

Login details have been provided to our main contact at each member company.

Back copies of 'Keep it Safe' are also available on line under the Health & Safety section.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES REGULATIONS 1989

The HSE have launched their new style Health and Safety Law Poster as required by the Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989. As of 6th April 2009, the new style poster will be the only version available from HSE.

According to the HSE Website "The new versions are modern, eye-catching and easy to read. They set out in simple terms, using numbered lists of basic points, what employers and workers must do, and tell you what to do if there is a problem."

Previous versions of the poster are acceptable until 5th April 2014 provided that the poster contains the correct details for the local enforcement (HSE/Council Environmental Health) and Employment Medical Advisory Service offices.

The HSE have also released pocket card versions of the new poster. These are particularly suitable for smaller businesses where there may not be room for the poster to be displayed or if there are only a handful of employees.

Both the poster and pocket card will be made available in Welsh. The pocket card will also be issued in easy read and large print formats in addition to a 'talking leaflet' version in MP3 format and are available from HSE Books (Tel: 01787 881165, web: www.hsebooks.com).

An electronic PDF of the Pocket Card is available free of charge at www.hsebooks.com

LABELLING OF LOADS CONSULTATION ENDS

An HSE consultation allowing interested stakeholders to have a say on additional guidance, which it recently published covering the labelling of loads for the purposes of manual handling ended on 29 May 2009.

Regulation 4 of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR), as amended, requires employers to provide information about the weight of loads.

This is not a new requirement, but the additional guidance published by the HSE in December 2008 serves as extra advice for employers about giving this information, since it was thought that how to comply with this part of regulation 4 may be unclear.

The HSE says that, in fact, it is not usually difficult or costly to give the right information and the additional guidance provides advice on how this part of the MHOR applies to various kinds of work, and how to comply.

The HSE is keen to emphasise that providing information about load weights can be useful, but should not be the only step you take to comply with the Regulations. Priority should also be given to the risk control measures, which are likely to be most effective in eliminating or reducing risk. For example, if a load is unusually heavy, it is better to handle it mechanically, use lifting aids or subdivide it (if this can be done).

The additional guidance can be accessed at www.hse.gov.uk/msd/loadguidance.htm

ENFORCEMENT ACTION

FIRST CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER CHARGE UNDER NEW ACT

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has authorised its first charge of corporate manslaughter against a geological survey company in relation to the death of a junior geologist, under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.

On 5 September 2008, a junior geologist was taking soil samples from inside a pit, which had been excavated, as part of a site survey, when the sides of the pit collapsed, crushing him.

A Director of the company, has been charged with gross negligence manslaughter and with an offence contrary to the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974. The company has also been charged with failing to discharge a duty contrary to the 1974 Act. The director faces charges both as an individual and on behalf of the company, as follows. The conviction for gross negligence manslaughter carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Convictions under the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 result in a fine. A conviction for corporate manslaughter attracts an unlimited fine.

COMPENSATION FOR ARM INJURY

A Merseyside man who injured his arm while lifting heavy pallets has received "a substantial sum" in compensation from his former employer, according to the law firm Thompsons Solicitors.

The employee reportedly had to take 15 weeks off work after he hurt his left arm while lifting heavy wooden pallets, following the accident, which happened in January 2008. On the day of the incident, the man was moving 5ft-square wooden pallets that had been stacked above head height outside the warehouse. The pallets had been left out in the rain and as a result were sodden and heavy.

Thompsons says that members of the union Unite at the printing firm had previously complained about the company's procedure for storing the pallets outdoors but nothing had been done to resolve the problem.

When the employee attempted to lift the pallet, it fell backwards, wrenching his left arm and causing a soft tissue injury to his left elbow and straining his left wrist. He was forced to wear a splint and had to undergo a series of injections for pain in his wrist. He has now retired from his job. Following the accident, the employee contacted his union Unite, which instructed its lawyers Thompsons Solicitors to pursue a claim for compensation. The company admitted liability and settled the claim out of court.

LANDMARK DECISION IN HEARING CASE

The Court of Appeal has recently ruled that a company should have done more to protect a female employee's hearing in a highly significant test case. Lawyers predict that as a result of the Court ruling, thousands of workers will now be eligible to claim compensation from employers who failed to provide adequate hearing protection.

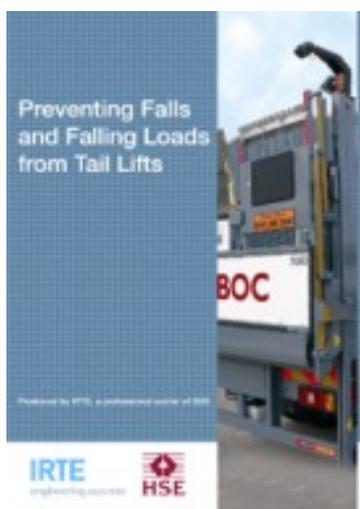
The woman worked for 20 years in the company's factory. It is believed she was subjected to 85 decibels of noise, which was previously not recognised as causing injury before 1990. In 2003, she found it more difficult to hear when out socialising and she developed occasional ringing in her ears (tinnitus). A hearing test confirmed that she had damage to her hearing known as noise-induced hearing loss.

The Court of Appeal found that the average employer should have known that a noise level of 85 decibels was not safe and should have provided hearing protection to workers after 1978.

PUBLICATIONS

LATEST IRTE GUIDE CHAMPIONS TAIL LIFT SAFETY

Half of reported tail lift accidents are due to falls and slips, or from falling loads. Realising the need for best practice advice in this area, the IRTE (Institute of Road Transport Engineers) have launched a crucial new guide, 'Preventing Falls and Falling Loads from Tail Lifts'.



'Preventing Falls and Falling Loads from Tail Lifts' was produced in association with members of a Tail Lift Users Group, which included the IRTE, tail lift operators, manufacturers and the HSE.

Benefiting from broad experience, the guide offers industry the opportunity to stay ahead of the game with regard to safety and is designed to supplement existing health and safety literature.

SOE technical manager Ian Chisholm said: "This guide is the product of an industry working together to meet challenges and exceed expectation, at a time when we cannot afford mishaps. The guide offers best practice advice and draws on the experience of experts in the field. It is a great addition to the IRTE's existing range of technical literature."

'Preventing Falls and Falling Loads from Tail Lifts' is FREE to download from www.soe.org.uk or copies can be ordered from Technical Engineering Coordinator Nick Edwards on 020 7630 1111.

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM HSE

HSE have issued the following new publications recently relevant to the industry:

'Working With Substances Hazardous To Health. What You Need To Do About COSHH'

This leaflet describes how to control hazardous substances at work so that they do not cause ill health and will help you understand what you need to do to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.

'Safety Signs And Signals. The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulation'

This publication consists of guidance and the Regulations. The signs are reproduced in full colour. It Part 1 covers safety signs in general, Part 2 contains advice on their selection and the use. Part 3 covers similar details for fire safety signs.

The above leaflets are available from the HSE: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/index.htm>

Advance Diary Date:

28th October 2009

BFFF Slips Seminar
with presenters from HSE and HSL

More details to follow shortly

To register interest email
hazelcranidge@bfff.co.uk

GUIDANCE

END OF PREMISES REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The HSE have issued a reminder that, as of 6 April 2009, employers no longer have to register the factories, offices and shops in which their employees work with the relevant health and safety authority. This is because new rules have removed the requirements to register under the Factories Act 1961 and the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963. In a statement, the HSE said this means that:

- Factory employers no longer have to complete the F9 form and register with the HSE
- Office and shop employers no longer have to complete the OSR1 form and register with their local authority

However, it should be noted that these changes do not affect the registration or form-filling requirements of other legislation.

Some businesses will still have to register and submit forms under other regulations. This will depend on the type of business and the regulations that govern it. For example, food and catering businesses must continue to meet food standards registration and other requirements, which local authorities enforce.

The general register for factories no longer applies and also factory employers will no longer have to complete and keep the series of forms and records that make up the "general register" (i.e. forms F31, F32, F34, F35 and F36).

HOT AND BOTHERED AT WORK

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) has renewed its call for the introduction of an upper limit on workplace temperature, as UK summers are predicted to get gradually hotter and drier over the coming years.

In a new report entitled 'The Case for a Legally Enforceable Maximum Temperature' the TUC says that UK factories and offices will become increasingly uncomfortable and potentially hazardous places to work.

The report argues that although employees are not expected to work when the temperature drops below 16°C (or 13°C if they are doing physically demanding work), there are no similar restrictions for when the workplace becomes too hot.

The TUC says that with long range weather forecasts suggesting a long, hot summer is on the way, it would like to see the law changed so that employers are forced to act when the temperature inside hits 24°C, and that staff could be sent home (or alternatively employers prosecuted) if it soared to 30°C (or 27°C for those engaged in physically demanding work).

The TUC report says, "When the temperature goes sky high at work, employees can suffer heat rashes, headaches, dizzy spells, fainting and heat cramps. Stifling hot working conditions also affect concentration, making workers feel tired and as a result more likely to endanger their own or their colleagues' safety."

[Click here](#) to view the report.

UPDATE ON FIRST AID

The HSE has recently updated its website on first aid, with the provision of revised guidance on the subject.

The new guidance is entitled First-aid Training and Qualifications for the Purposes of the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981: A Guide for Training Organisations and the new edition became available in April 2009.

The publication will help first-aid training organisations prepare for introduction of the new training regime for first aiders in the workplace, the full implementation of which will take place from 1 October 2009.

The changes came out of the HSE's consultation exercise on draft guidance for employers and first-aid training providers to support changes to first-aid training and approval arrangements.

Following analysis of the review's findings, it was agreed that the regulations and accompanying Approved Code of Practice should not be changed, but that within this framework there should be a new training regime for first aiders in the workplace.

The main drivers for the change were to:

- help employer duty holders access competent first aid
- provide a more proportionate response to first-aid needs
- minimise burdens on business.

The new guidance is now in place to support employers and training providers in the changes. There are changes to the structure and content of training courses for first aiders in the workplace, as well as the approval of organisations providing the training.

[Click here](#) to view the current guidance for first aid at work training providers published in 2006. To see the revised publication [click here](#)

ONE IN 10 WORKERS AFRAID TO RAISE SAFETY CONCERNS

The latest annual health and safety survey by the British Safety Council (BSC) has concluded that 1 in 10 workers is fearful of raising health and safety concerns in the current economic climate. On a more positive note however, in the same survey, over half of UK businesses making

cutbacks this year say that bosses' bonuses will be the first to go — before health and safety management.

Nevertheless, the BSC says the results of its second annual survey indicate that the recession is having a significant effect on health and safety in the workplace, which could put lives at risk.

The survey into the attitudes of bosses and workers to safety in the workplace also revealed that while 95% of bosses said they were confident about what they were legally required to do to make their workplace safe.

One quarter (26%) of them were not aware of three key pieces of safety legislation and advice mentioned (the Health and Safety (Offences) Act 2008, the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 and the Institute of Directors' Guidance for Directors).

[Click here](#) to view the full report.

WORKERS' HEALTH AND SAFETY

HSE has launched a new workers website. All workers, whether they are permanent staff, agency or contractors, need to be aware of issues that affect their health and safety at work.

[Click here](#) to view the website which provides information on both your roles/responsibilities and those of your employer.

RIDDOR WEBSITE RE-LAUNCHED

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) website has been re-launched with a new structure and style as well as the addition of a number of new features. View the new website [here](#)

MAJOR FOOD AND DRINK SAFETY CONFERENCE

The 2009 National Food and Drink Manufacture Health and Safety Conference will be held on 29 to 30 September 2009 in Nottingham. The event is being organised by the Food and Drink Manufacturing Health and Safety Forum and the Food and Drink Group of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).

The theme of the conference is "Delivering the Message," and will focus on:

- behavioural safety
- communications and multicultural issues
- training of managers and supervisors
- interacting with contractors
- health surveillance and screening.

The conference is aimed at a wide audience, including health & safety personnel. Further information can be accessed [here](#)

RESEARCH ON LOWER LIMB MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS

The HSE has published a new research report - RR706: Lower Limb Musculoskeletal Disorders - on workplace lower limb musculoskeletal disorders and injuries (LLD), identifying a range of causal risk factors involved in these conditions.

LLDs are a problem in many workplaces and tend to be associated with conditions in other areas of the body. The research indicates that there is "appreciable evidence" for kneeling, squatting, climbing stairs or ladders, heavy lifting, walking, standing, and slips and trips hazards being causal risk factors for LLDs.

The report concludes that further work is recommended to:

- clarify the inter-relationships between injury/pain at different regions of the body
- provide more detailed measures of workplace ergonomics risk exposures

- determine the suitability of existing control strategies and prevention interventions that have been proposed against conditions in other regions of the body (back and upper limbs)
- explore the benefits of exercise regimes and coping programmes for those with a condition
- identify strategies, other than regulation, that would aid increased awareness of the problems in workplaces and encourage the commitment of employers.

NEW FALLS FROM VEHICLES CASE STUDIES

New case studies concentrating on reducing falls from workplace vehicles are now on the HSE Website. Produced by employers, these case studies provide practical solutions to real problems. The case studies give examples of good practice from industry. They show how companies have tried to reduce injuries due to falls from vehicles. [Click here](#) for more details.

TOOL FOR RISK ASSESSMENT

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) has developed a new tool to help people responsible for workplace risk assessment. The "Risk Assessment Routefinder" was launched at their recent conference and provides a simple step-by-step guide to the risk assessment process for small businesses.

The Routefinder tool is free to use and operates by emulating a "sat nav" concept to help organisations in their "journey" towards a risk map that will identify the hazards they face and the changes needed to deal with them.

Routefinder can help to:

- manage its risks better
- use its resources efficiently to control risks
- improve the business's safety culture
- create a record of the risk assessment decisions made.

HEALTH & SAFETY WORKING GROUP

UPDATE

As previously reported, the Working Group have been focusing on accident statistics to see if work can be done to benefit our members. The Group has now reviewed statistical data for types of slips and their causal factors. The three main causal factors of slips were found to be:

- Build up of ice
- Slippery floors
- Housekeeping

We are working with HSE on a seminar which will highlight the above three areas with case studies, details of new innovation and good practice ideals to try and reduce the number of slips in these areas.

The HSE will provide a presentation by one of their experts for slips, trips and falls and also provide presentations/practical examples from experts from Health & Safety Laboratories to highlight areas of reducing slips where they have carried out testing such as flooring and footwear.

The date for this seminar is Wednesday 28th October 2009, more details will be provided shortly but please note the date in your diary and email your details to hazelcranidge@bfff.co.uk if you are interested in attending.

The group shares feedback on Health & Safety issues, which arise in their day-to-day business and help provide solutions to problematic areas.

If you have a query, which you wish to be raised for discussion at the group's next meeting, on a confidential and anonymous basis, please provide details to: hazelcranidge@bfff.co.uk

BFFF LAPS AGREEMENT

BFFF has a unique partnership agreement with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the Midlands and the Local Authority (LA) in Boston, Lincolnshire. This partnership is part of the Lead Authority Partnership scheme (LAPS) and was the first three-way agreement in the UK between the HSE, the LA and a trade association. [Click here](#) for more information on the LAPS scheme.

Through this partnership the HSE provide us with statistics which are particular to the frozen food industry and which we are able to break down into fatal, non fatal and over 3-day accidents for producers, wholesalers and retailers. We are also able to provide accident numbers for the freight transport and storage of frozen and refrigerated goods categories. The next set of statistics are due out soon and we will circulate them as soon as they are available.

HEALTH & SAFETY PLEDGE

The BFFF Health & Safety Pledge was introduced towards the end of last year to promote the benefits and emphasise the importance of complying with all current health and safety legislation and of striving to improve standards of health and safety through continuous improvement. We would encourage all members to seriously consider the benefit of signing up to the Pledge.

There has been a fantastic response with over 40 members signing up already. If you are interested in signing up please contact hazelcranidge@bfff.co.uk for more details.