

NORTH EAST CONSTRUCTION NEWSLETTER JULY 2011 - ISSUE NO.12

Red Tape Challenge – Have your say!

Health and safety regulations are designed to protect employees, employers and the public from harm arising from work activities.

From 30th June to 21st July health and safety regulation is the focus of the Government's Red Tape Challenge which gives people the chance to have their say on regulations that affect their everyday lives. The Challenge is therefore an opportunity for people to directly influence the future of health and safety regulation, to simplify health and safety and to support business growth in Great Britain.

The Government will act on the comments they receive, so it is important that there is a well-informed debate. You can find out more at www.hse.gov.uk/news/red-tape-challenge, or alternatively, join the debate now at www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk and give us your views on which regulations should stay, which should go and which should change.

Fatal injury statistics

Statistics published at the end of June show the number of workers killed in the construction industry last year has increased. HSE has released provisional data for the year April 2010 to March 2011, which shows the number of workers killed was 50, an increase on the previous year when 41 died. There were three incidents caused by structural collapse, which led to eight workers dying. The majority of deaths continue to be on small construction sites.

Further information on structural stability can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/stability.htm>

Further information on fatal injury statistics can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/fatals.htm>

RIDDOR – New arrangements for online reporting of injuries and incidents

From 12th September 2011, all other reportable work-related injuries and incidents under RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) will move to a predominantly online system. Further information can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/press/2011/hse-iccga.htm?ebul=gd-cons/jun11&cr=44>

HSE Construction Division Plan of Work 2011-12

A summary of the HSE Construction Division's Plan of Work for 2011-12 has been published. It sets out what the construction industry can expect from HSE Inspectors over the coming year - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/work-plan-2011-12.pdf>

Our main operational activities will target the following sectors:

- Asbestos (licensing and licensed work)
- Small sites/projects
- Refurbishment
- Major clients/projects



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Five issues will be considered at all site visits. These are:

Work at height - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/workingatheight.htm>
Asbestos risks - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthtopics/asbestos.htm>
Provision of welfare facilities - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/welfare.htm>
Good order - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetytopics/falls.htm>
Respiratory risks - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthtopics/respiratory.htm>

Any matters of evident concern or potential catastrophic events identified during site visits will also be addressed. As well as considering the five generic issues, we will also tackle:

Management of health risks	Leadership
Contractor Competence	Worker Involvement
Temporary Works	Temporary Demountable Structures
Employers Liability and Compulsory Insurance (ELCI)	Stonemasons and Renovation
Emerging Energy Technologies (On-Shore Wind Farms & Solar Capture Equipment)	MEWPS

Do you work with wood and MDF?

Information is available to tell you about the dust risks and how to protect yourself together with a useful video showing how much wood dust you could be breathing when sweeping up. Watch the video - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/woodworking/wood-dust-exposure.htm>

New guidance

Safe use of quick hitch devices on excavators – HSE internal guidance - Version 3 of this Sector Information Minute (SIM) addresses key issues that inspectors may wish to consider during inspection and gives guidance on instances where enforcement may be appropriate. Version 3 has been updated to include recent developments in both use and legal requirements.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/sectors/construction/020701.htm?ebul=qd-cons/jun11&cr=45>

Prevention of entanglement in the rotating parts of drilling and piling rigs – this SIM explains the most common drilling and piling rig uses and describes the steps owners, employers and operators need to take to prevent people becoming entangled in the rotating parts. It addresses the key issues that inspectors may wish to consider and provides initial enforcement expectations.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/sectors/construction/021104/index.htm?ebul=qd-cons/jun11&cr=46>

Safe use of telehandlers in construction – The Strategic Forum Plant Safety Group.

<http://www.cpa.uk.net/p/Telehandlers/?ebul=qd-cons/jun11&cr=50>

Recent Prosecutions

1) A Sheffield construction company was fined after one of its workers suffered serious head injuries and was in a coma for two months. The worker had been stripping out fixtures and fittings when he was hit on the head by a falling lighting pelmet - he was knocked off the stepladder he was using and fell around three metres onto a concrete floor. He has since developed epilepsy, still requires medical treatment and has been unable to return to work.

This note has been prepared by HSE Construction Division Newcastle upon Tyne to assist those involved with construction projects. If you wish to discuss the contents or unsubscribe please contact Construction Administration Newcastle, Arden House, Regent Centre, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3JN

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NORTH EAST CONSTRUCTION NEWSLETTER JULY 2011 – ISSUE NO.12

Teesside Magistrates Court heard that although the firm had produced a risk assessment and a system of work for working at height in the store, neither were sufficient as they failed to look at how the lighting pelmet and wall to which it was attached were constructed. As a result of this the company failed to identify the dangers its workers would face. The company pleaded guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were fined £15,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,228.75.



2) Two North East companies were fined after a member of the public was seriously injured when scaffolding collapsed during high winds in Shields Road, Byker. The pensioner suffered double fractures to her right hip joint and right femur, puncture wounds to her right ankle and severe bruising and was in hospital for 12 days following the incident.

An investigation by HSE revealed that the scaffolding contractor had not erected the scaffolding properly by failing to ensure it was adequately secured to the building. The scaffold had been reduced in height to a single working platform with

the wooden hoardings and sheeting still attached - in reducing the scaffold, the scaffolding company removed the arrangement that retained the scaffold to the building. HSE also found that the Principal Contractor had failed to ensure that the scaffolding was properly inspected both before work began and at regular intervals as it progressed.

The scaffolding contractor was found guilty, in absence, to a breach of Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and a second offence of breaching Regulation 8(b) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,182.30 at Newcastle Magistrates' Court. The Principal Contractor pleaded guilty to one breach of Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2091.15.

3) A Tyneside company was fined after a worker suffered serious injuries following a fall from unsafe scaffolding - Consett Magistrates Court heard he was working on the windows of a new building when the scaffolding platform he was standing on became dislodged, causing him to fall more than four metres to the ground. He suffered several crushed vertebrae in his spine and a fractured left foot and was in hospital for two weeks following the incident.

The HSE investigation revealed that the company had failed to control alterations to the scaffolding, failed to conduct inspections of the scaffold at least every seven days, failed to identify and correct unsafe alterations and allowed workers to use unsafe scaffolding.

The company pleaded guilty of breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were fined £1,500 and ordered to pay costs of £1,500.